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THE NATURE OF SPIRIT

REV. CHAUNCEY GILES

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THE

NATURE OF SPIRIT,

AND OF

MAN AS A SPIRITUAL BEING.

BY THE

REV. CHAUNCEY GILES,

AUTHOR OF "THE INCARNATION AND ATONEMENT," "HEAVENLY BLESSEDNESS," "PERFECT PRAYER," ETC.

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PREFACE.

"THE Nature of Spirit, and of Man as a Spiritual Being" has already had a circulation of perhaps one hundred thousand copies. It has brought comfort to sorrowing hearts, and has given to many their first conviction that definite and rational knowledge of the spiritual world is possible.

At the time that these chapters were written, the author, the Rev. Chauncey Giles, was pastor of the Church of the New Jerusalem in New York city, and was already widely known as an able advocate of the new spiritual truth revealed to the world through the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg. Having come to a knowledge of this truth himself after years of spiritual darkness and doubt, and having felt its wonderful power to inspire new hope and courage, Mr. Giles was intensely desirous to make known the message which was such a blessing to him. He was well equipped for the work which he undertook, having the gifts of an easy and powerful speaker and a mind well

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trained by many years' discipline as a teacher. It was his special effort to dispel the vagueness associated in most minds with spiritual subjects, and to treat them always with the utmost plainness and directness. His reasoning was strong from his habit of referring all things to universal principles; and his treatment of spiritual themes was made clear by constant illustration from the plane of nature, where he showed the same laws operating in visible, tangible forms.

In November, 1864, Mr. Giles began in the church of the New Jerusalem on Thirty-fifth Street, New York, a series of six lectures on the spiritual world. The first lecture was entitled, "The Answer of the New-Jerusalem Church to the Questions: What is Spirit? What is the Spiritual World? Where is it? and What are its Relations to this World?" The church was crowded on the first evening and throughout the course. After the delivery of the first lecture, the suggestion was made that it should be printed and be ready for distribution the next Sunday evening. This was done, and the experiment seemed so useful that it was continued through the course, five hundred copies of each lecture being printed and given away.

These lectures, as printed from week to week, became afterward the basis of this little book,

"The Nature of Spirit, and of Man as a Spiritual Being." They were written from week to week for the next Sunday's use, with no thought of making a book, and as Mr. Giles was too busy to revise them for printing, they were seen through the press by a friend. This was characteristic of Mr. Giles's literary work. Of all that he has published very little has been written originally for that purpose, or has received the careful finish which an author expects to give to a book. He wrote right along, with a plan of what he intended to say, but allowing his subject to grow and develop as he went; and as it was written, so it usually stood, with little change or revision.

To the six lectures above mentioned, two others afterward delivered in the New York church were added, and one on the Resurrection, delivered in the hall of the Cooper Union in November, 1865.

His lectures in the Cooper Union were an interesting incident of Mr. Giles's ministry in New York. The success of the first season's lectures in the church, led to a bolder attempt the following year to bring the truths of the New Church before the public. A course of five Sunday evening lectures was given in the great hall of the Cooper Union, at some of which probably fifteen hundred persons were

present. One lecture of this series has found a place in the present volume.

The chapters so collected were afterwards revised by Mr. Giles, with some additions, and were published as a book. It has been issued in several languages and in many editions. The demand has been constant and still continues both in this country and abroad, and a new edition in somewhat neater and more permanent form seems to be called for. In issuing it we are carrying out a desire expressed by Mr. Giles himself, and in the matter of style and in some very slight changes made in the text, we have been guided by what we know would be his wishes. May this little book long continue to be useful in extending a rational and satisfactory knowledge of man's nature and destiny.

PHILADELPHIA, October, 1894.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I. PAGE

THE NATURE OF SPIRIT, AND OF THE SPIRITUAL WORLD 9

CHAPTER II.

MAN ESSENTIALLY A SPIRITUAL BEING 35

CHAPTER III.

THE DEATH OF MAN 64

CHAPTER IV.

THE RESURRECTION OF MAN 88

CHAPTER V.

MAN IN THE WORLD OF SPIRITS 109

CHAPTER VI.

THE JUDGMENT OF MAN 132

CHAPTER VII.

MAN'S PREPARATION FOR HIS FINAL HOME 155

CHAPTER VIII.

THE STATE OF MAN IN HELL 180

CHAPTER IX.

MAN IN HEAVEN 210

THE NATURE OF SPIRIT

AND OF

MAN AS A SPIRITUAL BEING.

CHAPTER I.

THE NATURE OF SPIRIT, AND OF THE SPIRITUAL WORLD.

I INVITE your attention to a subject which must interest every one who believes in the possibility even of a life after this, and of another world in which we are to dwell for ever. Nothing can explain the indifference of those who have any belief in Christianity to the great realities of the future, but the conviction that it is impossible to know anything concerning spiritual beings and a spiritual world beyond the bare fact of their existence. How can an intelligent being remain indifferent to a subject of such infinite importance, if he believes in its reality? If any one of you knew that you must sooner or later remove to some

remote country, to spend the remainder of your life there, and that you might be called upon at any moment to go, you could not remain indifferent to the nature of the country, and to your own situation when you arrived there. You would lose no opportunity for personal inquiry; you would read every book you could procure, that treated upon the subject; you would exhaust all the means in your power to learn where you were going, and what your condition would be when you had reached your new home. How, then, can any one who believes in the existence of a spiritual world, and who sees one after another of those whom he knows and loves—beings as dear to him as his own life—daily passing away, and who knows that he must soon follow them;—how can a rational being, with such a belief, be indifferent to the nature of that world, and to the condition of its inhabitants? It is impossible to account for this general unconcern upon any other supposition than the prevalent opinion, that nothing definite and certain can be known about it.

There is conclusive evidence that this has long been, and is now, the state of the Christian world upon this subject. We are even told that it is not best for us to know anything about the world that lies upon the other side of the grave; that the Lord did not intend to have

us know anything definite about it. But all inquiries and all thoughts upon a subject so vital to our eternal interests cannot be suppressed, even by those whose doctrines teach them that such knowledge is impossible. Accordingly we have many theories and speculations; but they are so vague, so various, and contradictory, that they keep the mind in perpetual doubt, and finally defeat the end for which they were instituted. They confirm the mind still more strongly in the belief that nothing can be known about the future life, beyond the bare fact of its existence; and multitudes go still further—they deny its existence, and they now live as though there was no world and no life but this.

It was this general ignorance of the nature, and this practical denial of the existence, of a real spiritual world, and of a substantial conscious spiritual life for man, that rendered a New Dispensation of truth necessary. All knowledge, and consequently all practical belief in the immortality of man, and in the existence of a spiritual world, had nearly died out from the minds of men, and there were no means in the church to reinstate it. It required light from above. Open communication with that world, and with those who had passed into it, was necessary before the reality of its existence

could be brought home to the minds of men with convincing power. This is one of the special uses which the New Church will perform for humanity. It is one of the distinguishing features of this Church that she has a clear and logical doctrine upon this subject. She has disclosures to make which are consistent with themselves, with enlightened reason, and with the Sacred Scriptures; disclosures which satisfy all the wants of those who accept them, and which are generally acknowledged to be beautiful and consolatory, even by those who do not fully assent to their truth. It is to these disclosures that I invite your attention at present. I propose to give the answer of the New Church to the following questions: 1. What is Spirit? 2. What is the Spiritual World? 3. Where is it? 4. What are its relations to this world?

1. What is Spirit? I use the term spirit in the same sense I would use the corresponding term matter, in the question, What is matter? This is a primary and important question, and upon its correct answer depends all distinct and true knowledge concerning the spiritual world.

Our doctrines teach us clearly and explicitly that spirit is a *substance*, and must necessarily have a form. There are material substances and spiritual substances, entirely distinct from each

other. Matter is not spirit, and spirit is not matter; but both are real substances. As this is a most important point, and one that is contrary to common opinion, it is worthy of as clear statement and elucidation as possible.

And, first, let us get a clear idea of what we mean by *substance*. I do not use the term in any metaphysical sense. I use it in the common meaning as that out of which, or from which, any being, existence, or entity is formed. Every material thing is made out of some material substance. The potter makes his vessels of the substance we call clay. The carpenter builds houses, and forms various material objects, out of the substance we call wood. Ice is formed from the substance we call water, and water from the substance we call gas. The earth itself is probably formed of a gaseous substance. The material body is organized of material substances of various kinds.

In the same sense, we mean that spirit is a substance, and that every spiritual existence is formed from some spiritual substance. All Christians acknowledge that angels are spirits; if they are, they are formed of spiritual substances. Man is a spirit as to one part of his nature, and that part is formed of spiritual substances. If there is a spiritual world distinct from the material world, that world and all

things in it must be formed of spiritual substances. But if we are asked what a spiritual substance is *in itself*, we cannot tell. It is just as impossible, however, to form any idea of what a material substance is in itself. Who can tell what clay, or wood, or iron, or water, or gas, is in itself? Our knowledge of everything is limited by its relations to us; by its effects upon us. We are no more called upon to define what spirit is in itself, than we are to define what matter is in itself. It is impossible to do either. It is no objection, therefore, to the doctrine that there are distinct spiritual substances, that we cannot define what they are in themselves. All that we can know of any substance, material or spiritual, is the necessary conditions of existence, and the qualities that inhere in it as their subject; and we can learn these qualities only from the relation of their subjects to us. The blind man can form no true idea of the nature of light, for it has no relation to him. He has no organism to be affected by it; but if you tell him that there is no luminous body, and no substance which is the subject of light, he can come to no other just conclusion than that there is no such existence or entity as light. We can say the same of spirit, though it is not appreciable by any of the senses.

We may now advance a step further, and say

that no existence is possible without a form. If there is any such existence, or being, or entity, as a spirit, it must have substance and form; for there can be no substance without a form. It is impossible for the mind to conceive of anything without form. Let any one try to conceive of such a material thing, and he will see how absurd it is. The very idea of conception implies form. An idea is an image; an idea, then, is a form. Spirit as well as matter, therefore, must have substance and form, for they are the two factors which are essential to any existence, or to the conception of any being or thing. Spirit is the correlative, not the negation, of matter.

Here is the point in which philosophers and Christians have made the mistake, fatal not only to all *true* knowledge, but to *all* knowledge of spirit. It has generally been assumed that the only way to arrive at a true idea of spirit, was to regard it as the opposite of matter in every respect. They reason in this way. Matter has form, therefore spirit has none. Matter has substance, therefore spirit has none. In this way they deny to spirit all possible modes of existence. The Christian stops here, and ends by simply affirming its existence, but denies that we can know anything more about it. But many push this destructive logic a step further, and deny the existence of spirit altogether. And this is

the logical result, for denial can never end in anything but negation and nothing. This is inevitable; and the Christian escapes this conclusion only by stopping before he reaches it. We must admit that there is a spiritual substance, and that this substance has form, or we must deny the existence of spirit altogether. No other conclusion is possible.

But to make the proof as strong and clear as possible, let us assume that there is a spiritual world, and that there are spiritual beings; but deny that there is a spiritual substance, and see to what absurdities it will lead us. What is a world? What is the meaning of the word, world? Has not the world form? Is it not made up of innumerable objects, all of which have form: all of which are composed of material substances? Suppose you take away from this world all its forms and substances: would there be any world left? There would be nothing left. Is it not just as absurd to say that there is a spiritual world, while you deny to it any substance or form? You would not hesitate a moment to pronounce a man foolish, or insane, who should deny that there could be any such material substance or form as wood, and then begin to describe a tree; or who should ridicule the possibility of the existence of water, and then proceed to expatiate on the nature and

beauties of a river, or the grandeur of the ocean. But are not all those guilty of this absurdity who talk of heaven as a real place; who think of the Lord as seated on a throne, surrounded by saints and angels, dressed in white robes, wearing golden crowns, and playing on golden harps, and making "heaven's wide arches ring" with their hallelujahs; or writhing in the torments of hell, and filling the dreary abodes of the lost with lamentation and woe? Christians delight to sing—

> "Sweet fields beyond the swelling flood
> Stand drest in living green,"

and yet, according to the theory, they have no substance and no form. What kind of a field would that be which had no substance and no form? How could it be "drest in living green"? Christians often talk of meeting their friends and loved ones who have gone before. But how can two beings without form or substance, beings which are no beings, meet? How could they recognise each other? What can be more absurd than such an idea? Christians think of the Lord as seated on a throne, with the Redeemer at His right hand; and yet they declare in doctrine that "He is a being without body, parts, or passions," and think it derogatory to His nature to attribute to Him any form. But

if He has no form and no substance, He has no existence. Instead of gaining any worthy conception of Him by denying Him substance and form, they, doctrinally, annihilate Him. Into such difficulties, contradictions, and absurdities, the mind is led by trying to do that which is impossible. We conclude, therefore, that if spirit has any existence, it must be a substance and have a form.

The mind has the power of conceiving of qualities without, or abstracted from their subjects. But those qualities do not and cannot exist separate from their subjects. We can conceive of sweetness; but sweetness has no existence apart from some substance that is sweet. We can conceive of strength; but strength has no existence apart from some being or thing that exercises it. There is no abstract power. We can conceive of love, goodness, and truth, but they are not abstractions; they have no existence but in their subjects. But, because we can conceive of them without connecting them with any subject, men have been insensibly led to regard them as distinct and independent existences. In this way the mind and spirit, and all our intellectual qualities, have come to be regarded as abstractions without form or substance, and yet as real existences. But if we apply the same process of reasoning to the body

or to any material thing, we shall see its absurdity at once. Take the power of steam, for example. We can conceive of the power abstracted from the steam itself. The engineer talks and reasons about its existence, nature, quality, and application, as though it was a distinct existence; and if the steam itself was not appreciable by any of the senses, we might come to regard it as a distinct thing, without any substance or form. But we know that it is impossible to abstract the power from the steam, and say here is the power, and there is the steam. The power is the force with which the steam expands. Where there is no steam there is no power. They cannot be separated in fact. The same principle applies to all qualities, mental and spiritual. There can be no thought, affection, goodness, or quality of any kind, without some subject in which these qualities reside; and those qualities cannot exist separate and distinct from their subjects. All qualities are essentially the forms, activities, and relations of their subjects. If there is no spiritual substance and form, there can, therefore, be no spiritual qualities. While, therefore, we can see how the mind is led away to regard an abstraction as a reality, and to conceive of it as existing without any form, we can see, at the same time, the utter impossibility of such an existence.

From whatever point of view we regard the subject, therefore, we come back to the conclusion that spirit must be a substance, and have a form. The doctrines of the New Church are, therefore, in harmony with analogy, necessity, and reason, in declaring that *spirit is a substance*, and has forms, qualities, modes, and established laws of existence relatively the same as matter.

2. Our second question is: What is the Spiritual World? Having established the truth that there must be a spiritual substance, if there is any distinct spiritual existence, everything necessary to constitute a distinct spiritual world and substantial spiritual beings follows as a necessary consequence. For if a material world can be formed out of material substances, surely it is not illogical to infer that a spiritual world, composed of objects as numerous and various in quality, can be formed out of spiritual substances. Indeed, it would be quite absurd to infer the contrary.

Consequently, our doctrines teach us that spiritual substances bear the same relations to each other that material substances do. They are solid, and fluid, and aeriform. The solids exist in every possible variety that material solids do. There are spiritual earths, rocks, and metals, as gold, silver, and iron, in every variety

of quality and form. Indeed, there is a perfect mineral kingdom formed of spiritual substances. These substances are also organized into vegetable and animal forms. There is also, then, a vegetable and an animal kingdom, based upon the mineral kingdom, and bearing the same relations to it that the same kingdoms do to the mineral kingdom in this world. The spiritual earth is diversified with mountains, hills, valleys, rivers, and smaller streams, and out of this earth, grass and flowers, shrubs and trees of every kind, grow, relatively the same as in this world. Birds fly in the air, and animals walk upon the earth, and the spiritual beings who dwell there have their habitations, and gardens, and fields. They look out upon beautiful landscapes, and look up to the heavens above them. The earth is as solid and firm to their tread as this is to ours. And the spiritual objects are hard and soft, solid and fluid, cold and hot, light and heavy, rough and smooth, transparent and opaque, and of every conceivable form and color and quality, that objects have in this world. And there are many forms and qualities besides, that cannot exist in matter, because it is so gross and dead compared with spiritual substances.

Now it may be, and sometimes is, objected to this view of the spiritual world, that it is only

materializing it; attributing to it those qualities which this world possesses; and instead of a spiritual world, by this process of reasoning, it is said, we only get another material world. This might be true, if spiritual substances and objects had no other qualities than material objects. But, as we shall see hereafter, they have many qualities impossible to material objects, and they are altogether superior, and pre-eminently excellent in every respect, in their forms, origin, and relations to the inhabitants who dwell in that world.

But let us suppose that there is a spiritual world, which has nothing in common with this world, not even substance and form, and see what will be the result. We can do nothing more than affirm that there is such a world; we can have no idea of it. We cannot conceive it under any form, or mode, for by the supposition it has none. It has no mountains, hills, earth, rivers; no sun, no light, no atmosphere; nothing in common with this world. What is it, then? Nothing. It is no *world;* for the very idea of a world presupposes substance and form and objects. Thus we cannot go beyond the simple affirmation of the existence of such a world. We cannot form any idea of it; for by the supposition it has no *form*, it has nothing in common with this world; and we even deny its ex-

istence by the very conditions of our affirmation. It is this absurdity of denying to the spiritual world every possible mode and form of existence, and then trying to conceive it or think upon it, that has resulted in such doubt and practical denial of its reality, and of the possibility of spirits being really human beings, having a complete human form. There can be no middle ground between the practical denial of any substantial spiritual world and the acknowledgment that it must be similar in general form and relations to this world. If we take any step beyond a simple affirmation of the existence of spirit under conditions of which we can know nothing, we must assert that it is a substance and form; and all that is necessary to constitute a world follows, by a logical necessity.

In affirming, therefore, that there are spiritual substances and forms, and a spiritual world similar to this in general appearance, though superior to it in every quality, we do no violence to any analogy, we contravene no law of reason. We act also in perfect accordance with revelation; for the whole Bible implies the reality and substantial nature of the spiritual world; and we come to a conclusion which we cannot possibly avoid, without violating all known laws of reason and existence.

Our answer to the Second Question, then,

What is the Spiritual World? is this. *It is a real world, composed of all the forms that are necessary to constitute a world.* It is objective to the senses of those who dwell in it, and far more distinct, substantial, and real to them, than this world is to us. And yet it is not material, but is as distinct from every form of matter as the soul is from the body.

3. Having determined the possibility of a real spiritual world, our next question is, Where is that world? There is a common and very remarkable absurdity frequently taught upon this subject. There is the implied denial that there can be any real, spiritual world, and then an assertion that it is somewhere above us in the stars; or, it may be, in some central sun. I presume most persons think of heaven as above them, somewhere in the realms of space. But, if we should visit every planet and sun in the material universe, we should not find the spiritual world. We should be no nearer to it than we are now. If it is some central sun, it is material and not spiritual. If it is in any particular place in the realms of space, it must be material and not spiritual. Where, then, is it?

It is here; and it is everywhere around and within the material universe. We are in the spiritual world now, though we are not con-

scious of it. Our doctrines affirm that there are as many spiritual worlds as there are material worlds, and that the spiritual world corresponding to each planet is around it. So that every human being in any world can say, The spiritual world is *here*.

Why, then, it may be asked, can we not see it? I answer, we have the best of evidence that multitudes have seen it. Many instances are given in the Bible of persons who saw it while they were still in this world, and they have told us what they saw. In several instances recorded in the Bible it is distinctly said that the persons were "in the spirit," or had their "eyes opened." These could not have been their natural eyes, for they were open before. They must have been their spiritual eyes. For it requires a spiritual eye to see a spiritual object.

In our ordinary state, the spiritual senses are closed, and we have no consciousness from the senses of any world but the material. And a little reflection will show us, that it is wisely ordered that it is so. It would be impossible for us to perform our duties in this world, if we had constant, open vision of the spiritual world. We should be distracted, and our natural life destroyed by it.

But that it is possible for us to be in the spiritual world, and yet not be conscious of it, is

evident from many analogous examples. Our unconsciousness of anything is no proof of its non-existence. The man who has become blind by the formation of a film over his eyes, is in a world of light the same as before, but he is not conscious of it, and he cannot be until his blindness is cured. He does not need to *go* anywhere to get into it. If he should visit every planet and sun in the universe, he would be no nearer the world of light. It is all around him, like the atmosphere, but he can only be introduced into it by the removal of the veil which obstructs the light. Couch his eyes and he can see. The organism of the eye is the Divine method of introducing men into the world of light. In the same way a man may be in the spiritual world and not see it. The spiritual eye is veiled by the material. Its organization is too delicate to be acted upon directly by the gross forms of matter. It requires the delicate spiritual ethers to flow into its forms, and the dark veil of matter to be removed, before spiritual objects can be revealed to it.

It is the same with all the senses. In a perfectly sound sleep a person is as truly in the material world as he is in full wakefulness. But he has no consciousness of it. Change of place would give him no consciousness of the world. Place him under the open canopy of heaven,

beneath all the splendor of the sun, or the magnificence and silent grandeur of the stars. Place him on a precipice, where the slightest motion would hurl him to destruction, and it is all the same. *Wake* him, and he is in the world without rising from his bed. Our spiritual senses are asleep, and we cannot see the spiritual world about us until they are awakened.

But it is not necessary for us to see it as it is in itself, to gain a certain knowledge of its universal presence. We never see any cause or power in its most interior forms—in its source. Who ever saw attraction except in the form of its effects? No person in this world ever saw, with the natural eye, a human being. No one but the materialist believes that the material body is the man himself, yet that is all we can see in this world. We see material features, colors, motions, changes. But we do not see the real human being. That dwells within, and can only manifest itself through the veil of the body. All that you see, or can see, is the material covering of the spiritual being. You know that the man is there, within. For the body cannot move itself. It is as helpless as any other earthly object, when man leaves it. Its wonderful organization does not give it life, any more than the multiplication of wheels gives a machine power. The organs of the body are

nothing but instruments constructed by Infinite Wisdom, to enable the soul to accomplish its purposes in the material world.

But the man and his material body act together in such perfect harmony, as one, that we say we see the man himself, when we see the body. And it is proper we should, for we do see where the man is and what he is doing. We know that he is in the body, and that it is he that hears, and sees, and feels, and speaks, and acts, though we cannot see his real self.

In the same way the spiritual world is present in the material world, maintains it in existence, and operates all the changes in it. The planets are carried around in their orbits by a spiritual force. We very properly call it attraction, but attraction is only the name of the effect. The real force is spiritual. Matter has no power in itself either to change its form or to retain it. A piece of iron or stone is held together by attraction, we say. Remove the attraction and it becomes fluid. Remove it to a still greater degree and it becomes aeriform, and we do not know where the process would end. All the forces which keep material bodies in their form are in their last analysis spiritual and Divine.

Matter has no form of its own. Every material form is cast into the mould of a spiritual form. There is no power inherent in matter to

form itself into diamonds and granite; into grass, and blossoms, and fruit, and the innumerable beautiful objects of the vegetable kingdom. There is no quality in nitrogen, carbon, and phosphorus, to combine and assume the form of bones, muscles, and flesh. The whole animal kingdom is cast into the mould of the corresponding spiritual kingdom. And the spiritual forces which create and sustain it are constantly present and active. Indeed, the material world is a perpetual creation.

Wherever you see action, change, or growth, you may infer that spiritual forces are present, with just the same certainty, that you infer that man is in a material body, when you see it moving, and performing all the functions of life in this world. It is said that the changes and motions which are continually taking place in matter, are caused by the light and heat of the sun. This is true in one sense. Heat acts on a certain plane and to some extent. But it is a spiritual substance within the heat which causes the heat, and gives it its power; and while the heat, on the material plane, softens and melts the hard forms of matter, and makes them pliant to finer influences, spiritual forces flow in and mould them into such forms as they are capable of assuming. The sun itself is created from the spiritual world, and its mag-

netic forces and ever-radiating heat are perpetually fed from it. The suns are the primary centres into which spiritual substances are gathered, and from which the material universe is created, and those substances continue to dwell within the magnetic auras and luminous ethers. Light, and heat, and magnetism are only the finer material coverings of spiritual substances, which give them all their force. They are the soft linings of grosser forms. Wherever there is matter there is spirit. Wherever there is a material world, there is a spiritual world. Wherever there is a germ, or plant, a blossom, or fruit, or any living thing, there is a rough cast of a spiritual form. It may be a very rude and imperfect outline of it, comparing with it only as the roughest sandstone with the fine organization of the living body, or the coarsest clay with the delicate petals of the blossom. But rough and coarse as it is, it was fashioned after a spiritual prototype, as the material body is moulded into the form of the man who dwells within it. The elements of the earth have no more power of themselves to assume the forms of the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms, than the food we eat has to assume the human form, or than the block of marble has to roll itself from the quarry and stand erect in the graceful beauty of a Venus or Apollo.

This every one acknowledges; but Christian and natural philosophers carry the cause only a few steps from the effect, and seem unwilling to admit that there can be any substantial thing beyond the limits of their own senses. But the doctrines of the New Church, with an inflexible logic, follow all real causes out of the material world, and in doing so, they look in the direction, though far in advance, of all scientific discovery. The logic is simple, and the steps plain. One of the essential properties of matter is inertia; its purest and most subtile forms have no more power, of themselves to act, than the sod or rock. Nor can these forces reside within, as original and self-sustaining causes in the form of laws. It is customary in common speech to attribute the power, which moves and moulds matter, to physical laws. But law has no more power in itself than matter; it is merely the order in which some real power acts. The planets are not kept in their orbits by the law of gravitation, but according to it. Strictly speaking, civil laws have no power. They are only the rule and method according to which men act. The preservation of the material universe, and all the changes and activities which take place in it, must be the effect of a cause which is not material, and that cause must be present to all the forms of mat-

ter and in them, in every particle; for a cause cannot act where it is not present. That cause cannot be material. It must of necessity, therefore, be spiritual.

Here we get another proof that spirit is a substance. It is evident that there can be no abstract power. Power is the force with which something acts. That which moves and moulds the material world must be substantial. It must be able to grasp matter and wield it at will. The inconceivable and awful forces that sustain the material universe, and carry planets, and suns, and systems in their vast orbits, in such order and harmony, are spiritual, and are perpetually operating. The same forces sketch ferns in crystals of frost upon the window-pane, weave the green web of the leaf, knit the tough fibre of the oak, and mould the delicate and lovely forms of the lily and the rose. Out of the dead earth and crumbling stone; out of dews and rain-drops, and vernal airs, and sunbeams, they distil the delicious juices of innumerable delicate savors, and exhilarating wines, and present them to insect and worm; to animal and man, in the beautiful forms of the berry, the purple cups of the grape, and the golden bowls of the pear and the apple. Turn where you will, above, around, below, all the forms you see are spiritual forms, veiled in the

thin disguise of matter; all sounds that fall upon the ear are spiritual harmonies, muffled and made discordant often by the imperfect material instruments through which they are sent to us. We are in that world now. It surrounds us, pervades us; its pulses beat through us, and give to us and to all things, form, motion, life.

I ask every intelligent mind if this is not a rational, and the only rational view of the subject? Does not all scientific discovery point in this direction? Science is resolving all physical force into heat. The next step must be the one the New Church has already taken—the acknowledgment that all force is spiritual. Thus the two worlds are present to each other, and are most intimately blended. Our answer to the third question, therefore, is: *The spiritual world is here.*

4. The last question, What is the relation of the spiritual world to this world? has been substantially answered already. In principle it is the relation of cause to effect. The spiritual world is more real and substantial than the natural world. It lies nearer to the first great Cause. This world was formed from it, and there is not a material object that has not a spiritual prototype.

Such, briefly, are the doctrines of the New Church upon this most interesting subject. In many respects they reverse the opinions commonly entertained. They give us a real spiritual world to think about, and to look forward to as our eternal home. The more they are examined the clearer their truth will become. From whatever side they are regarded, whether from science, from analogy, from reason or revelation, from human or the Divine nature, they will be found consistent with themselves, with the Sacred Scriptures, and in harmony with all we know of both worlds. They will satisfy the reason and content the heart.

CHAPTER II.

MAN ESSENTIALLY A SPIRITUAL BEING—THE VARIOUS DEGREES OF HIS LIFE—REASONS FOR COMMENCING HIS EXISTENCE IN THIS WORLD.

In discussing the great themes which I have selected for our consideration, it may prevent disappointment, and assist us in coming to just conclusions, to bear in mind that the proof of the doctrines which the New Church teaches upon these subjects, cannot be of the same nature, though it may be just as conclusive, as that which we accept concerning natural things. We cannot demonstrate the spiritual world and the spiritual body to the natural senses; we cannot see and feel a spiritual form. The senses take cognizance only of those things to which they are specially adapted. It is as illogical and absurd to ask for a physical proof of the existence of a spiritual truth, as it would be for a man to demand that light should be demonstrated to the senses of hearing and touch, before he would believe in its existence.

We must not forget, also, that our minds are finite, and there are some things which we can-

not know; which no finite being can ever know. We can gain no knowledge of anything as it is in itself, in its inmost essence. The wisest man is just as unable as the little child, to tell why certain effects should follow certain causes. For example: No natural philosopher can tell why the waves of ether flowing into the eye cause the sensation of light. He will tell you all about the coats and lenses of the eye, and show how perfectly they are arranged to form an image of the natural object upon its retina. But ask him why those causes produce such an effect, rather than another, and he cannot answer a word. It is neither necessary nor useful to us to know the essences of things, and the reasons why certain causes will produce certain effects. It is enough to know that those causes do exist, and to be able to trace their connection with their effects.

I hope, also, that I shall not convey to any one the impression that I seek to prove a point by any trick of logic, merely for the purpose of making out a case. An enforced conviction is of no value. We are immortal—we are to live through unending years. You and I, my friends, in a few days, are to push off into what to most persons "is an unknown dark." Can we gain any clear, rational knowledge of what awaits us? I believe, I know, we can. The writings

of the New Church contain disclosures upon this subject, which must be satisfactory when understood, and which can be found nowhere else. I desire only to tell you what those disclosures are, and to give you such reasons and illustrations of their truth, as may assist you in accepting them.

I am to speak of man as a Spiritual Being; of the various degrees of his life; and to give some reasons why he commences his existence in this world.

1. Our doctrines declare, and the whole force of their teaching and logic goes to show, that man is essentially a Spirit. Let us get the full force and meaning of this proposition clearly before our minds. We mean far more by this declaration than that man *has* a spirit. We mean that he *is* a Spirit; that every distinctly human quality he possesses is spiritual. Or to reverse the proposition: a spirit is a *man*—a human being; and there are no men, no human beings, who are not spirits. You are spirits, and all that distinguishes you from the plant and animal, is spiritual. The substances out of which you are made are spiritual, and the human form which those substances have assumed is a spiritual form. Plants and animals emulate the human form, but they do not attain it, because they

have no spiritual nature in the human form, to mould the material into its likeness.

It is the prevalent opinion that man is in the human form only as to his material body; and that his spirit is some vital force, which gives him life somewhat as steam gives motion to machinery; and it has been a disputed point with philosophers for ages, in what particular part of man his soul or spirit dwelt. Some put it in the head, some in the heart, and some in other parts of the body. When a man dies it is common to say, "His spirit has left him," as though some part of him, some formless essence, had fled and left him behind, implying that the material body is essentially the man himself.

But the doctrines of the New Church take exactly the opposite view. They declare that the *spirit* is in the human form; that it dwells in every part of the body, in the minutest microscopic cell and fibre. Instead of saying, or admitting, or implying, that man is a material being and *has a spirit*, we say he *is* a *spiritual being* and *has* a material body; and when he dies, the man departs and leaves his material body behind him. It is the spirit that gives form to the body, casts it into its own image and likeness, and constantly gives it the power to retain the human form. Consequently, when

man leaves his body, its organization falls to pieces; the substances which composed it are dissipated, and the whole form disappears. But the man himself is not touched by it. He retains his distinct personality. His human form is no more affected by the dissipation of the material body, than *that* is by the wearing out of his clothes. Now let us see what reasons we can find for this spiritual personality of man.

In the last chapter I showed that a spiritual substance is as necessary to the existence of a spiritual world and spiritual beings, as matter is to the existence of a material world and a material body. Admitting, then, that there are spiritual substances, and that these substances can exist in various forms—as aeriform, fluid, and solid—we have no difficulty in admitting that a complete spiritual body could be organized out of them, having the same organs, within and without, as the material. This spiritual body could have a head, trunk, and limbs; the spiritual senses could be organized in the same manner as the natural senses; the head could have eyes, ears, and brains, and all the features of the face; a spiritual heart could beat in the chest, and propel spiritual blood through spiritual arteries; the lungs could breathe a spiritual atmosphere, and perform the same office for the blood, that the material lungs do for the mate-

rial blood. Indeed, there could be a complete spiritual body, in every particular, in the human form, competent to perform all the functions of a man relatively the same as the material body.

2. Having shown the possibility, according to our admitted premises, of a fully-organized spiritual man, let us look at its probability.

A little observation will convince us that it is in perfect harmony with all we know of the Lord's methods of accomplishing His purposes, that man should have this spiritual organization. If we go back to the beginning of time, we find, according to the testimony of the earth itself, as it is recorded in the rocky pages of its own history, that it was then a seething mass of inorganic elements. According to general belief, it was a molten ball of fire, with no ground, no rock, and no distinction of forms in its fiery mass. By cooling, rocks, and afterwards earths, appeared. The perfection of mineral forms was attained by crystallization, which seems to be a rude effort and faint prophecy of organization.

The next step is the plant. The finer elements of matter are organized into a new and higher creation. A wonderful series of forms are combined, mutually acting and reacting upon each other and working together for a definite end. A germ unfolds into a root for the earth, and a stalk for

the air. Each goes its own way, multiplies itself, and imbibes the materials necessary for the growth of the whole plant. The slender stalk becomes a trunk, which spreads out into branch, and stem, and leaf; into stamen and pistil, and blossom and fruit. The end is reached; the circle of its life is complete. It is a wonderful mystery. Its methods and order, the beauty and variety of its forms, are past all human comprehension. But the plant is unconscious of its own beauty and glory. It stands immovably fixed in the earth. It can do nothing but grow and bear leaves to fall, and blossoms to fade, and fruit to perish or reproduce itself.

What plan does Infinite Wisdom devise to take another grand step? Does He abandon the old method by which He made the plant? No; He effects it by a new series of finer and more delicate organic forms. He uproots the plant from the earth, and gives it *sensation*, by means of a new series of organic forms—the nerves. And now you may begin with the lowest zoöphyte, and go all the way up, step by step, through all the grades of animal life, until you reach the highest, and you will find that the Lord never deviates from His first method. Every step consists in a finer and more complicated organization. There is no exception to

this law. Man, viewed simply as a material being, stands at the head of all animal life; and he surpasses all other creatures in the fineness and complexity of his organization.

Man is the crowning work of the Creator. We cannot doubt that it was the Divine purpose to make all things serve him, and to bring him into the most intimate and various relations to all forms of matter and all degrees of animated life. How has Infinite Wisdom effected this end? How has He given man such power over the earth, that he can make every element and every object serve him? By his organization. The eye brings home to his door the sun and the planets, and remote constellations; mountain and valley, ocean and stream; the specific forms of mineral, plant, and animal; the grandeur and beauty of the landscape; the splendors of color; the perpetual play of light and shadow; reveals them to his consciousness, and makes them the objects of his affection and thought. Occupying but a few cubic feet of space, and by his nature bound to the earth, and limited to a few natural objects by personal contact, he can yet, with one scope of vision, take in the canopy of heaven, and the vast amphitheatre of earth. But the eye reveals to him only one class of material qualities, the forms, and motions, and changing hues of earth and

sky, and is affected by matter, only in one of its distinct degrees, the ether.

Another degree, the air, is filled with innumerable harmonies, communicated to it by leaf, and tree, and stream; by mountain, and ocean, and storm; by bird and beast. The sounds of labor, the many-toned voices of truth, of friendship, and love, and the inspirations of the great masters of song—how can they be made available for human use and happiness? The Lord solved the problem by the formation of another organ, the ear, adjusted to the activities of this material plane. The ear gathers up all these vibrations, and pours the riches of harmony, thought, and affection, into the soul. By this simple but miraculous arrangement, the air is made the medium of communication between man and man, and every soul is brought into intimate contact with many others.

There are other qualities of things of which neither eye nor ear can gain any knowledge; the fragrance that flows from all material objects; the savors that make delicious the reception of the food necessary to our sustenance. The Lord organized senses to perceive all these qualities and communicate to man their delights. The sense of touch reveals to us still other qualities of material objects; enables us to

handle them, and mould them into special forms adapted to our use.

Thus we see that all man's knowledge of the material world, and all his ability to use the various objects which compose it, are given him by his organization. This is the method of Infinite Wisdom, and, so far as we know, there are no deviations from it.

Now, when He desires to take another distinct step; when He wishes to create a being of a higher order than plant or animal; to endow him with thought and reason; to give him the power to see the order, beauty, harmony, and evidences of design in the universe, and to love the Lord and his neighbor; when He determines to communicate to him all those qualities which are distinctly human, and which make him the perfection and glory of the creation, is it probable that He abandons the method which He has hitherto uniformly pursued? Every step in the progress from chaotic matter to the will and the understanding—those qualities which conjoin man more immediately with the Lord Himself—has been effected by a finer and more varied organization; and now He abandons this method! nay, reverses it, and accomplishes His highest ends by a thin, invisible vapor, a substanceless and formless essence! Can you conceive anything more improbable

and absurd than that? It would seem impossible for any rational mind to entertain the idea for a moment. If there is any force in the law of analogy, it cannot be. The whole creation, with united voice, proclaims that, when the Lord would create a being to think, to reason, and to love; to exercise those faculties which we call spiritual; He would effect it by the organization of spiritual substances.

3. We must guard against the opposite error, however, of supposing that the perfection of man is due to organization and form alone. The nature of the *substance* of which the organ is formed, is as essential to its perfection as the form itself. And here we find a most conclusive argument for the truth, that man is essentially a spiritual being. Matter cannot observe, reflect, remember, compare, reason, understand, and love. It has no voluntary power. Refine it and organize it to the utmost extent of its possibilities, it is still passive, and in itself dead. Consequently the human body cannot perform one of its functions, after man has left it, though its organization remains perfect. The eye cannot see, the ear hear, the brain think. Matter can perform material offices only. It follows, therefore, of necessity, that it must be some other substance that is the subject of mental and

distinctly human qualities, and that substance must be spiritual. If it is not, we have no knowledge whatever concerning it. We are inevitably brought to the conclusion, therefore, that all those qualities which distinguish man from the plant and animal, and are properly human, are due to his spiritual nature; or in other words, they are activities of a spiritual organization.

4. Still, some persons may distrust a course of reasoning against a generally accepted principle, even though it may seem conclusive. They may think there is some flaw or sophistry in it, though they may not be able to detect it, and say, "It looks plausible, perhaps it may be so, perhaps not." Let us suppose, then, that it is not; that man is not essentially a spiritual being; that his human form and organization are limited to the material body. He has no spiritual eye, no ear, no brain, no face, no head, no heart and lungs; no hands, no feet, no limbs, no veins, arteries, nerves. Is he not literally, and emphatically, *nobody?* What is there in him to think, to feel, to know, to will, to act? Nothing. By that process of reasoning, if it is worthy of the name, you annihilate him.

Some may say, there is a vital principle or an abstract spiritual power left after the dissolution of the material body. But there can be no ab-

stract power. Power is the force with which some form and substance acts. A principle is nothing but the law or method according to which causes effect their ends. We may affirm, and reaffirm, that the soul exists; but if we deny to it all forms and modes of existence, our verbal affirmation will avail nothing against our practical denial.

5. But we argue, further, that man cannot preserve his identity, and his consciousness of individual existence, if he has no spiritual or personal form. When the material body is resolved into nitrogen, phosphorus, carbon, and the various gases and earths of which it is composed, it is no longer a human body, and consequently there is no possibility of its identification, for all personality is lost. We hope to meet our friends, when we pass into the spiritual world, and to be reunited to those we love. But how shall we know them, if neither they nor we have any form? Two—what shall I call them?—two essences, without substance or form, two vital principles *meet.* What a meeting! How could they *meet?* What is there to meet or to be met? How could they recognise each other? What would there be to recognise? What special characteristics would there be to distinguish and individualize them? None.

Suppose some soul or vital principle did con-

tinue to exist, as a breath or vapor, or formless and unsubstantial ghost, it would not be ourselves, any more than the ashes on the hearth, and the gases and vapors dispersed in the atmosphere, are the tree with its coronal of peculiar leaves, its glory of blossom, and its wealth of fruit. Suppose there do remain real essences, but diffused and unorganized, as the carbon from a consumed diamond, or wine from crushed grapes. The diamond could not identify itself in the gas. Charcoal, and other material forms, might claim with equal right the same substance. No individual grape of any particular cluster could discern and separate from the pipe the fine globules of juice that filled its cells. No more would a human essence find itself in a formless atmosphere or cloud of diffused and interblending essences. No one could say, "This is I." There is, therefore, no hope for the continuance of your existence, unless you can retain your human form. Allowing that some residuum may remain from you, it will not be you. You have become absorbed in the undistinguishable elements, your identity is lost, and you are no more.

6. The force of this truth presses upon the understanding so powerfully, that even those who deny that man has a spiritual organization,

are compelled to admit its possibility, and to acknowledge that he will have a spiritual form, and become *somebody* at the resurrection. But if material substances are to be transmuted into a spiritual body by the purification and exaltation of their elements, then there can be spiritual substances and a spiritual form, and the whole question of impossibility is given up. How much more rational and in accordance with all we know of the Divine methods, to admit that there are spiritual substances distinct from matter, capable of being moulded by the Divine wisdom into every variety of organic form.

7. In the first chapter I gave some reasons for believing that the spiritual world is a real world, filled with innumerable forms objective to those who dwell in it. But if that world is the abode of souls that have no form and no substance, and, consequently, no senses, it is of no consequence whether it is a world of surpassing beauty, or a dreary, unchanging void. It would be all the same to them; having no eye, they could see no beauty; having no ear, there could be no harmony for them. It would be a land of unbroken silence, of eternal darkness and hopeless death. Can the human mind conceive a greater absurdity than such an idea? As we rise towards the All-perfect, do we come

into the realms of silence and nothingness? As we are formed more fully into the image and likeness of the Lord, do all personal distinctions fade away? Do we lose our identity, and become a nameless and formless essence? So far as our observation extends, distinctness and individuality of form, fineness and complexity of organization, increase with every step of progress. But when man is to take the final step which separates him from all other creatures, and allies him to angels and the Lord, the whole process is reversed, the universal method is abandoned, and all things revert to emptiness and chaos!

No; it cannot be. No difficulty is avoided by this supposition; nothing is gained by it but innumerable contradictions, an insult to reason, the practical annihilation of man, and the denial of a universal method and infinite wisdom to the Lord.

But this question is one of such transcendent importance, and one about which there are so many doubts and so much unbelief, that it is useful to get all the testimony we can upon the subject. Let us therefore see what the Lord teaches us in His holy Word upon it.

1. The Bible in every part regards the spirit as the man. Its whole scope, form, and purpose are directed to man as a spiritual being. It

appeals to his fears and hopes as a spiritual being. If it is anything more than any other book, it is a revelation to man of his spiritual nature, of a spiritual world, of a spiritual destiny, of a substantial existence in a spiritual world totally distinct from the material world. It comes to man in his Egyptian darkness, and bondage to the flesh and the world, to break off his material chains, to lift him up into a light higher than his own. The Lord appears to him, and rescues him from natural dangers and death, when there was no possibility of any human aid, that He might get recognition from men; that they might know from actual experience that there is another world, and other beings, and supernatural influences immanent in this. The Lord gives man laws with supernatural sanctions; sends His angels to warn, rescue, and guide; sends His prophets with His Word; works the most stupendous miracles, and finally comes Himself, by assuming our nature, to keep alive in man the idea of his spiritual being and destiny. That is the whole scope and purpose of the Lord's manifestations to men, and of His instructions through prophets and apostles in His Word.

2. Furthermore, the Lord everywhere recognises man as a spiritual being. He addresses him as such. His laws respect him as such;

they look to the thoughts and intents of the heart. The outward action, the merely bodily, physical deed, is not anywhere recognised as the essential act. It is the motive, the intention, the act of the spirit, that weighs. "Circumcision is of the heart." "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit." "I am come," our Lord said, "that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." Not physical life, but spiritual life. "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."

3. But let us look at some particular examples. When the Lord speaks of those who have passed from this life into the spiritual world, He speaks of them as living and substantial men. In His reply to the Sadducees, who did not believe in any life after this, He says: "As touching the dead that they rise, have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living." If there is any force in this reasoning, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are still living as real, substantial beings. They preserve their personality and identity. Abraham is still Abraham, and Jacob is Jacob still. They are not some unsubstantial, formless, shadowy essence, or vapory ghost of what they once

were. They are not some abstract principle of thought and affection, while all that constituted them distinctly human beings lies mouldering in the grave, or is dispersed among the elements; but the men themselves. And if they are alive as real human beings, so are all who have passed into the spiritual world. If this is not so, God is no longer their God, according to His own declaration. They are dead in the sense the Sadducees understood it. They have ceased to exist. The death of the body is the extinction of their being. Our fathers, and our children, and our many loved ones whose bodies we have committed to the earth, are no longer ours. They have no God. They are nothing. They have been annihilated. And we shall soon follow into the abyss of nothingness.

At the transfiguration, also, Peter, James, and John saw two men, who were Moses and Elias, who appeared with the Lord and talked with Him. Is not this conclusive evidence that Moses and Elias were still living as distinct human beings? If it was some formless essence, or abstract thinking principle, why was it designated as Moses and Elias? Why might it not have been any thinking principle?

In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, also, we have first an account of the rich man and Lazarus in this world; then the state-

ment that they died; then we find them in the spiritual world, Lazarus in Abraham's bosom; the rich man in hell. They recognise each other; they speak to each other. How could they if they were formless essences? They have organized members of the human form. Lazarus has a finger; did he not also have a hand, an arm, and a complete human form? Dives had a tongue, and could speak; and so also could Abraham. Does not this imply all the organs of the head, the brain, thorax, lungs, and the whole human form? Had they lost anything of form, feature, organization, or personal existence? Nothing. Yet they died and were buried. They were dead in the sense commonly given to the word.

But to remove all doubt, John, reporting what he saw in the spiritual world, says, "I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands. And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." Now here we have persons who have a voice, which implies the whole internal organization of a human being. They had hands, and held palm branches in them. They had feet and stood

upon them. They were clothed with white robes. Were they merely vital principles or formless essences, belonging to organized bodies then lying in the sepulchre; or which had become incorporated into animals and plants or other human bodies? One of the elders told John that these glorified and rejoicing were—what shall I call them?—vital sparks, the mere adjuncts of a human being? No. "These are they which came out of great tribulation." They came from the earth, therefore. They were men and women who had lived and labored and struggled and died upon this earth. They had been prophets, apostles, and martyrs. They constituted a part of that cloud of witnesses of whom the Apostle says: "They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection." And they had attained it. For the angel declared: "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of water, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

This evidence might be indefinitely multiplied. But it is unnecessary. Those who will not be convinced by the testimony already given, would not be if their own eyes were opened, and they could see the great multitude of the departed, and hear their heavenly songs. They would call it an illusion of the imagination. And yet any other supposition than that the spirit is the man, is contrary to the whole tenor and purpose of the Scriptures, contrary to the testimony of apostles and prophets, the angels, and the Lord Himself; and involves the whole question of the future life of man in contradiction, doubt, and darkness.

On the other hand, the simple admission that man is essentially a spiritual being, having a complete human organization and form, accords with all we know of the Divine method of accomplishing His ends; is in the direct line of all His providences, in harmony with reason and revelation; involves no contradictions, and holds out to man the sure and glorious hope of preserving his identity through eternity, under more favorable conditions, for the exercise of every faculty, and the attainment of every joy.

I have dwelt somewhat at length upon this topic, because it is of essential importance to all our subsequent investigations. Man is the subject of this whole series of chapters. We are

to follow him, if possible, from his earthly home into the spiritual world; to learn the changes through which he passes; the means by which they are effected; and the nature of his life, when he reaches his final abode. But if he vanishes from our mental sight, we may speculate and reason, but it will be to no purpose, for we shall reason about we know not what. It is necessary to have a substantial subject, or being, to whom we can refer all these changes and activities. Then we shall have a definite form before us, and we shall not be lost in endless abstractions.

Regarding the truth as well established, then, that man is essentially a spiritual being, or a spirit in the human form, having a substantial spiritual body, which is to preserve its identity through all its changes to eternity, we are prepared to discuss our next topic, which is:

II. The various degrees of his life. It was a true saying of ancient wisdom, that Man is a microcosm, a universe in miniature. Into his nature and form are collated all the substances and qualities of the whole creation. Every kingdom and plane of nature has its representative in him. The golden chain of being let down from the Lord finds all its links in man, and by him returning to the Lord, completes the cycle of causes and effects. But these in-

numerable substances, forms, and qualities, are not promiscuously blended in him; they are arranged in distinct planes, which everywhere run parallel to one another, but never meet. This distinction of degree is seen in the various kingdoms of nature. It is also seen in the human body. The bones, the nerves, the blood-vessels, are all perfectly distinct from one another; all have different functions; all act together in unity, but each preserves its individuality, and never becomes merged in the other. Thus, as to his material body, man is a series of organic forms, one rising above another in excellence and use. By these various degrees of his being, he is related to the various planes of matter. By the eye and the nervous system he is connected with the ether and the finer magnetic element, by the ear and the lungs, with the atmosphere; by the other senses, which are all modifications of the sense of touch, with solids and fluids. Above and within the material body, he has a spiritual body, which has the same distinct degrees as the material, and by them he is related to the spiritual world, in the same way that he is related to the material world by the three planes of the material body. The highest or inmost degree of his life lies next to the Lord, or to the purest vital forces which perpetually flow from Him, and fill and

give life to all beings, and perpetual creation to all things. This inmost degree of his spiritual organization is brooded over and pressed upon by Divine influences, as the outer surface of the material body, which lies next to the material world, is pressed on all sides by the atmosphere, the ether, and the various material forces. These degrees never coalesce. They are a clean cleavage, running through nature and man. They extend out indefinitely in their relations to all things on the same plane, but no degree can rise above or fall below itself. These discrete degrees constitute the golden chain of being—the Jacob's Ladder on which the angels of God ascend and descend. The Lord is at the top of it; the earth on which it rests, at the bottom. Thus, the highest and the lowest meet in man. He is the grand audience-hall where all beings and all things can meet, from the Lord to the rock, each in its appropriate place, and he can give to and receive from all.

The subject is one which demands fuller consideration than I can give it now. I have barely stated it, because it seems necessary to a clear understanding of our next and final topic, and that is:

III. The reasons why man commences his life in this world. The various planes or de-

grees of existence which are found everywhere in nature and man, rest one upon another. The foot of the ladder stands upon the earth. The highest degrees are not fully formed first, but last. I say *fully* formed. They do, indeed, exist as causes, or, as we say, in potency, but not actually. They exist as the tree exists in the germ of the seed; as the animal in the embryo. But they cannot become fully formed without a basis to rest upon.

Let us look at some examples and illustrations of this general truth, and then apply them to the particular case under consideration. Let us suppose this problem,—one which has already been solved. Given the sun and all spiritual forces, to form a plant. It could not be formed in the sun; its fierce fires and intense activities would not permit it. The earth must first be created. Those pure, flaming substances which compose the sun must be emitted from it, and lose so much of their intense life as to become quiescent and passive. They must become rock and earth. Then a basis is formed on which the finer material and spiritual substances can rest, and into which they can act. Now the Lord can form the germ, and endow it with power to collect the materials necessary to its growth. The sun stimulates all its activities, and communicates to it of its own substance;

the atmosphere and the water give their quota, and in process of time the plant is formed, and the problem solved. Now, you will observe, that in the first part of the work, the letting down of the chain, there was no organization and no possibility for any. Auras, ether, gases, fluids, and, finally, solids, were formed. Then the bottom was reached, and the ascent began. But in every step of the ascent, there must be a solid, a coat, or skin, or containing vessel, to hold the finer elements during the process of their organization. The grain of wheat, for example, must first form a vessel, which eventually becomes the chaff, to contain the pure substances that are to be organized into the grain. For they must be in a fluid state, or they would not yield to the spiritual forces which act from within and effect the organization of the grain, and cast it into their own mould.

Thus, the whole vegetable kingdom rests upon the mineral kingdom, and could only have been formed subsequently to it. The animal kingdom, also, is based upon the vegetable, though in a different and more perfect way. Destroy all vegetable life, and all animals would soon die, and man himself must cease to exist upon the earth. There was the same necessity for a basis and containing ultimate for the

organization of man as a spiritual being, that there was for the grain of wheat.

But let us take another example. An artist has a clear conception in his own mind of a beautiful human face. It is an ideal or spiritual form, and he desires to bring it out into actual and permanent existence before him. If he is a painter, it must be done by means of light, of color. The light flows around him; all its colors are in every ray that enters his eye. But he cannot use them directly. They must be embodied in material substances before he can handle them; and then he must have his canvas, or some other material basis, upon which to deposit them, in the various combinations necessary to bring out into permanent form the beautiful conception in his own mind. The Lord is the great creative artist, and this is the plan His infinite wisdom has formed to create all beings and all things. The spiritual body cannot be organized directly from spiritual substances. They must have a material basis to rest upon—a material covering to contain their fine essences until they are deposited and wrought into such organic and permanent forms, that they may become the subjects of thought and affection; of a conscious, and when in true order, of a blessed life; a fit temple for the indwelling of the Lord.

This is a brief and very imperfect statement of a doctrine, which, as we shall see, has a most important bearing upon the succeeding subjects.

Thus the earths are the seminaries of the heavens. Upon them, the Lord plants human souls as the husbandman plants seeds in the earth, that they may gain organization, form, and individual being. And when that is accomplished, they throw off the material body, as the wheat rejects the chaff, and pass on into open and conscious life in the spiritual world. There, freed from the incumbrances and restrictions of a material body, with their identity perfectly preserved, they will find full scope for the development of all good affections, and the attainment of every joy. Every step, from conception to the grave, has been a preparation for this grand result. How this great step in life is effected, will be the subject of our next chapter

CHAPTER III.

DEATH; ITS NATURE, NECESSITY, AND CAUSE. AN ORDERLY STEP IN LIFE.

THE theme of the present chapter is one of the most momentous to human hope and happiness that man is called upon to investigate and decide. If death is the end of our individual and conscious being; if nothing remains but the ashes from the burnt taper, or a formless essence that soars away and mingles with the elements; if our glowing hopes, our lofty aspirations, our consciousness of capacities for knowledge and happiness which have just begun to expand, are all cut off by death, and buried in the grave—then, indeed, man is the greatest enigma in the universe. Compared with the possibilities of his nature, he is the fading flower, the withering grass, the morning cloud, the tale that is told.

But if death is only the completion of the first little round in life—the first short flight; if it marks the end only of his seed-time; if his budding hopes, his lofty aspirations, and dawning consciousness of desires which no earthly

good can fill, are but the swelling germs of faculties that are to blossom and bear immortal fruit; if he leaves in the grave only the swaddling-clothes of his spiritual infancy, and rises as from a sleep, in perfect human form, with all his memory, his consciousness of individual being, to enter upon an endless career, in which hope is changed into fruition, and aspiration into attainment; then death is the grand step in life. It solves all its enigmas; it is the fulfilment of which this life is but the prophecy; and to the wise and pure it opens the shining portals of an endless day.

The doctrines of the New Church teach us, that death is this great step in life; that, from the beginning, it was a part of the Divine plan, according to which, man was to attain the highest possibilities of his nature; that it is necessary to the success of that plan; is orderly progress; is the natural side of the same event we call resurrection; and instead of shrinking from it as his direst enemy, he ought to regard it as his great deliverer and best friend.

I propose to give you some reasons for this belief, and as far as space and ability will permit, to offer the testimony which the Lord Himself has given to its truth, in the two great revelations, recorded in His Word and created in His works. I invite your candid and earnest atten-

tion to this testimony. Lay aside, if you can, the prejudices of the past. Bring fresh and open minds to its consideration; weigh it in the balances of reason; measure it by the Divine methods written on everything around us, and judge it by your own conceptions of the ends which a being of infinite love and wisdom must seek in the creation of nature and man, and you can hardly fail to come to just conclusions.

In the first chapter of this work, I endeavored to show that there are distinct spiritual substances, and a real spiritual world; in the second chapter, I gave some reasons for the belief that man is essentially a spiritual being; that he is a spirit in the human form, with a complete human organization, having spiritual senses adapted to spiritual objects, as his natural senses are adapted to natural objects; that the material body is no part of the man, but simply the sustaining basis and continent of those spiritual substances of which the man himself is formed—the instrument he uses to perfect his complete spiritual organization, and lay the foundation for the superstructure of his future life.

Let us keep the fact distinctly before us, that the spirit is the man himself, and not some *caput mortuum*, some formless essence or unsubstantial ghost. For if we lose sight of the man or mistake some unessential part of him for the man

himself, we lose sight of the subject of our thought, and we may reason and speculate for ever, and come to no satisfactory conclusion, for we do not know what we are reasoning about; and we shall be like men who run, but know not whither, and who, consequently, will never find the end of their race. Let us not be cheated, then, by any jugglery of words or any illusion of the senses. Let us keep the eye of the mind steadily fixed upon the spirit as the man himself.

What, then, is the death of man, according to the common meaning of the word *death?* I answer: It is the withdrawal of the man himself from the material body. He casts the body aside. He deserts it. And by this act he steps out of this world into the spiritual world. By the simple act, no change is effected in the man himself, in form, organization, or character. He is no better and no worse; he knows no more and no less; he has not lost or gained a single feature or faculty. He has only gained more favorable conditions for the attainment of his ends.

Nor is any change effected in the material body by the simple act of death. It has the same form, the same organization. Its nerves of sense and motion are all perfect; it possesses as much life as it ever did—that is, none at all. For all that the body ever had was the ability to respond to

the life of the spirit. The simple act—the thing done—is the separation of two organic forms, which before had acted together as one. That form, in which life resided, still retains it; and that which was dependent upon the other for all its power, and even for the ability to resist the common forces of nature and retain its form, has lost it; and is as powerless to love, to think, to feel and act, as the substances which compose it were when they were metals, earth, and gases. It is true a great change soon commences in both forms. The material body having lost the special power which gave it organization, and enabled it to resist the common forces of nature, yields to their action, and returns to its former state—becomes earth and gas, and mingles with the elements; while the *man* enters upon his new career, under new conditions, with corresponding results. Such is the change we call death. It is very small in itself, but most momentous in its results.

If we look at the body alone and mistake that for the man himself, as most persons practically do, the change is terrible. There lies the form we have loved, cold, motionless, dead. The red current of life that flowed through artery and vein, has become a standing pool; the nerves that gave sensation to the whole body and special ability to each organ to do its appropriate

work, have lost their power; the light of thought and affection no longer beams upon us from the eye; the ear is deaf to our imploring cries; the smile of love has faded from the white lips, and no voice of recognition can ever move them more; the arm has lost its power and the fingers their cunning; the feet will run on no more errands of love and duty. And soon the very form disappears, mingles with the elements, and is lost. How terrible the fate, if that body was the man himself! How irreparable the loss if the friend, the child, the husband, the wife we loved, was that form! I do not wonder that those who have no idea of man as a spiritual being shrink from death with horror; that it is universally regarded as the great agony and terror, and that multitudes cling to the hope that these elements may be reorganized into the human form, and man's personal existence be restored to him.

But if we regard the spirit as the real man, there is no loss of being or form or consciousness; there is no death. The same heart beats with the same love as ever; the same eye is luminous with affection and kind thoughts; the same ear hears, not our outward cries, but the secret aspirations and yearnings of our souls; the same face beams with the same, or a more unselfish and ardent love, and the lips whisper

it to our inward ear; the same arms are stronger to give us spiritual support, and the same hands minister to our real wants with greater efficiency and tenderer skill; and the whole life of those we have loved is nearer our life, and throbs in and through our inmost being with a stronger pulse than when the same form and the same life were separated from us by a wall of clay. We see them not. We never saw them. Only the mask they wore was visible to the natural senses. They have thrown off that, and when we throw off ours, we shall really see them and be seen, "For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: . . . then shall I know even as also I am known." Such is the apparent and such is the real change we call death.

Let us now endeavor to ascertain the true grounds and necessity for the decay and dispersion of the material body. Is death an accident in man's life? Was it sent upon him as a punishment for sin? Is its real cause due to disease or external injuries? Or, is it a necessity from the nature of matter, from the nature of spirit, and from the Divine purposes as far as we are able to discern them in the Divine character and methods of operation as they are manifested in the Lord's Word and works? It is important that we settle these questions if possible; for if we can be assured that the death of the material

body is an orderly step in life, that it was contemplated in the creation of man, and is not an interruption of the Divine purposes, and a penalty for sin, it will do much to disrobe it of its terrors and to give us juster views of the comparative value of spiritual and natural things. Let us examine the question, then, on all sides; from the material, the spiritual, and the Divine.

We have no evidence that any material form can long retain its organization. Matter in itself is dead, passive, has no form of its own, and, by the action of general laws, constantly tends to its original chaotic state. All organization in the plant, animal, and man, is formed and maintained by special forces, counteracting the general laws to which matter is subject. Indeed, the material body is not a fixed, definite, and permanent object in itself. The substances which compose it are continually passing away, and must be continually renewed. They are like a flowing stream, going and coming. And the human form is perpetually maintained, because the soul seizes the new materials and casts them into her own image. The body is always dying and ever being born. When the form reaches its maximum, the creative and the destructive forces seem for a time to be in equilibrium. The banks of the stream are full. In a few years it begins to diminish, and no power of the

soul is able to restore it to its former vigor, or to prevent it from final decay. There are no exceptions to this fact, either in plant or animal, and we have no grounds for supposing that any material organization is or could be indestructible.

Again, if man had lived immortal here, the number of inhabitants must, sooner or later, have reached the limit of the earth's ability to sustain them, or even to furnish room for them to stand; and then the creation of human souls must have ceased. But who can believe for a moment, that all the human beings this little mote in the universe can sustain, would satisfy the demands of infinite love and wisdom? What would the Lord do through the coming eternity? Could He be contented to sit down and merely listen to the endless repetition of prayers and praises from a few men and angels? That would be contrary to the very nature of love. Love impels to action; it is a motive power; it is creative. Fill a human heart with a powerful affection, and it impels the whole man to action. He cannot remain idle; idleness is a perfect torment to him. What then must be the effect of infinite love, guided by infinite wisdom?

But if the creation of human beings should cease by the limitation of the earth's capacity to supply their material wants, the whole structure

of society must be changed. Many of its important elements would soon be wanting. There would be no infancy, no childhood, no age; no room for enterprise, and no ground for enlarged hope. Man would be limited on all sides, and however high he might rise, society must, at some period, reach its level and become in a great measure stagnant. Viewed from the nature of matter and the material world, then, there are no evidences that it would have been for man's happiness, or that it would have been possible even, for him to remain forever in this world. On the contrary, every principle of matter is against the supposition.

Let us now examine the question from the side of spirit, of the soul, and see if we can come to a different conclusion.

It is in accordance with the experience of all ages and universal consciousness, that all our mental and spiritual faculties are limited and restrained—"cabined, cribbed, confined"—by the material body. We begin to feel its restraint in infancy, and we maintain a life-long struggle against it. The infant feels it in its first efforts in learning to walk. Indeed, it is this very desire to escape from the restraint, that impels it to the difficult and perilous task. The foot will not convey it to the desired spot; the hand will not grasp the glittering bauble. The

youth, with all his exuberant life and strength, chafes under it. He would mount with the eagle; he would fly with the wind; he would be here, there, everywhere, to gratify his insatiable curiosity. But the body lags behind and anchors him to the earth, and fetters his limbs. When he would learn to wield the instruments of labor or art, his industry and patience are tested to the utmost. Even in the prime of life, the body is never perfectly obedient to the soul. And then how soon the eye fails the scholar; the hand will not obey the musician; the nerves grow tremulous, and the muscles tire. A great part of the invention, skill, and effort of humanity is employed to overcome the weight and drag of the body. The steamship, the rail-car, and the telegraph, have all been called to assist man in keeping pace with his desires; and though they have nearly annihilated space and time, he is as impatient of delay as ever, and grieves and despairs at the immeasurable distance between his attainments and his wants.

It is true he gains in his control over the body for a time but he soon reaches the limit of its capacities; and then its ability to express the thoughts and affections, and do the will of the spirit, continually diminishes. The strength fails; the senses grow obtuse and dim; and the body becomes the soul's prison; shuts it out

from the material world and all its delights; fetters its limbs with feebleness, and immures it in a dungeon, devoid of light and joy. How terrible would be its fate if there was no release from it. And we have no grounds for believing that the body would not decay, even if man had not sinned, for the plant and the animal are subject to the same law. But death comes as a blessed deliverer from this bondage to the flesh; breaks off our chains, clears the mist from the eye, and sets every faculty free.

Without doubt this resistance stimulates and develops our spiritual faculties, compels us to control and moderate our desires, and in manifold ways is useful to us for a time. But suppose we could throw off this burden of clay entirely and escape all the limitations and obstructions of time and space, and still retain our personality and the reality of our existence,—should we not accomplish at once what we are in the continual effort to do with all our labor and skill? If the spirit is the man himself, this is the service death renders us, and therefore it is necessary to the attainment of the highest possibilities of our nature. Every spiritual principle demands it. It must, therefore, have been a part of the Divine plan in our creation.

Keeping in mind this continual struggle of the soul against the limitations and weight of

the body, let us see what the Lord reveals to us in His works concerning this subject. By general consent man is the only being in the world that is not in order and harmony with all things. The laws which regulate the material world are so perfect in their action, that whenever there is any perturbation, or deviation from the established harmony, scientific men begin to search for the cause. Once they feared it was due to some defect, and foreboded ruin; but since they were better instructed, they seek for some wider and more general law. When Leverrier found that there were irregularities in the motions of the outermost planets in our solar system, which could not be accounted for by any known laws of planetary motion, he inferred that there was a planet beyond Herschel not yet known to astronomers. And, after much observation and many calculations, he told them where to look for it; and when they pointed their telescopes to the spot, they found it according to his prediction. Applying the same principle to man; when we see the perturbations and conflict between the spiritual and material conditions of his life, all analogy would lead to the conclusion that there must be some cause beyond this life, some world above this, to whose laws he is subject, and that this conflict with matter and struggle for freedom is due to grander harmo-

nies, and bids us look to that world for the solution of this apparent anomaly and the true home of the soul.

The same lesson is taught still more forcibly in many other ways. So far as we know, there are no superfluous organs, no excess of power beyond use, in any part of the creation. Everything below man reaches its maturity, completes the cycle of its life, and attains its end. The plant does not seek to become an animal; the fish does not aspire to dwell upon the land or soar in the air; the animal gives no indications of any thought or desire for anything beyond this world. It finds enough here to satisfy every want and fill every desire. The demand and supply are always equal. There is no lack and no excess. There are no exceptions to this law.

This is not only true in general but in particular. Everywhere, in plant and animal, we find special adaptation. The child soon knows that the fish belongs to the water, and the bird to the air. This law of specific adaptation is so universal that scientific men never hesitate a moment to decide according to it. The geologist finds for the first time the petrifactions of some long-extinct animal. The comparative anatomist will construct the whole animal from them. He will tell you whether it dwelt upon

land or in the water, or both. Nay, more, he will give you the general condition of the earth at the time the animal existed. The instructed mind can see the climate, the natural production, the relative prevalence of land and water, and the complete natural history of the earth, all written on the scale of the fish and the petrified bone—so perfectly are all things and all planes of the creation related. Ask him how he knows. Tell him he has never seen the animal. Perhaps no human eye ever rested upon one of its kind. May he not be mistaken? He laughs at your incredulity. The Lord, he would say, never deviates from His laws; He never makes any mistakes; He never fails in perfect adaptations. I am as certain that my deductions are true, as you are that the fish on your table came from the water, though you never saw it there.

Now is it probable that this law of adaptation, in large things and small, in general and particular forms, is universal until we reach man, the crown and glory of the Lord's works, and then fails? It is too irrational and absurd to be admitted for a moment. It is evident enough, even to superficial observation, that all things below man were created for him, and while they are all so beautifully and perfectly adjusted to one another, do they fail of their last con-

nection? No sane mind can admit so great an absurdity.

But we say, I do not feel in harmony with these earthly things. They do not fully content and satisfy me. Very true. Suppose they did, what would it prove? That we were an animal and nothing more. And the fact, that no earthly good does content us, proves just as conclusively that we have faculties which can only find full scope for their activities, and wants which can only be supplied in a spiritual world; and consequently, it shows that man must discard the material body before he can obtain the means of fully satisfying all his wants, and the absolute certainty that natural death was one of the merciful provisions of the Lord from the beginning.

There is another law in nature, also without exception, which leads by inevitable deductions to the same conclusion, and if possible makes it more certain. The plant and animal attain their perfection by distinct steps, and in the lower steps preparations are always made for the higher; and when the higher step is taken, the means by which it was taken become an encumbrance and are discarded. The natural world is full of illustrations of this law. Indeed, every organized form is an example of it. One will serve our purpose. Take the sparrow

in the egg, just before it bursts the walls of its prison and escapes into the air. Here is a fully-organized being, and yet not one of its organs is adapted to its present condition. Here are bones, muscles, feathers, especially adapted, in every respect, to the air. Every part is constructed with the utmost lightness, and the muscles are distributed and gathered into volume for the express purpose of giving strength where it is most needed. The form of the wing is made to cleave the air and bear the bird aloft. It has eyes for light, lungs for breathing, and a throat for song. But the sparrow can exercise none of these functions in the shell. Suppose it was conscious of its state as it lay there in its womb, but did not know of any other world than that in which it was dwelling. It feels the impulse to stretch its wings, and pour forth a song, but it has no scope for either. If it reasoned as many men do, it would say: There is nothing here to content or satisfy me; but I know of nothing beyond. This shell is the boundary of my universe. If it should be destroyed, I might fall into nothingness, or be dispersed among the elements. How can a poor sparrow know anything beyond its own experience? It is true the sparrow cannot reason, but acts according to the instincts implanted in its nature by the Lord to be the law of its life,

and consequently it struggles against its narrow walls, and soon emerges into a new world. Now it sports in short flights from tree to tree; fills the morning and the evening air with its social song; finds its mate and attains the full end of its creation. It feels no impulses, and has no hopes, beyond its fruition. It follows the law of Divine wisdom embodied in it, and reaps the full rewards of its obedience.

Now, *we* believe that every bone and muscle and feather, and every organ within and without, is a true prophet of its future state. We know also that every prophecy is fulfilled. These organs foretell another world of ineffable perfections compared with the one in which it was formed. They prophesy of air and light; of joyous song and social flight; of worm and seed for all its needs—and every prophecy is fulfilled to the letter.

So it is with everything in the material world. Wherever you find any overplus of organization or strength beyond the present wants of plant and animal, it is an unfailing evidence of a state not yet attained. Does any one suppose, then, that these blind surgings of man's soul against the prison walls of the body have no meaning? Does the Lord follow a certain method with unvarying regularity up to man, and then stop short, and even reverse it in him? No; it cannot

be. The Lord always works like Himself; He pursues the same order and method in all planes of the creation that come within our knowledge, and no human ingenuity can suggest a reason why He should abandon them for man, more than for the insect and sparrow.

Every one knows that we never find anything in this world to content and satisfy us fully. We often think we shall be satisfied when we have a little more; but that little more enlarges and recedes as we approach it. *Enough* is an ever-receding goal. The men who have the most knowledge are the most eager for more. Those who have the largest fortunes are the most anxious to accumulate. Alexander weeps for more worlds to conquer; and Newton, who has weighed the planets in the balance of his intellect, and with cunning fingers has disentangled the solar ray and showed its various colored threads, standing on the pinnacle of his amazing knowledge, is yet "the little child upon the shore who has found only a few shells, while the vast ocean of truth lies unexplored before him." The artist embodies the highest conceptions of his genius on canvas or in marble; but immediately his conceptions rise above themselves; he sees new beauty and grandeur in the human form; and he, too, is running towards an ever-receding goal. The same is true, only

in a greater degree, of the affections. There is no home so beautiful and full of love as to satisfy every ideal affection; there is no being so perfectly the complement of our own, that we can conceive no lack and no superfluity.

These ideals and aspirations after something which the world cannot give, are to man, in the material body and the material world, what the organization of the sparrow is to the egg. They are voices implanted in man's nature prophesying another world, that shall be adequate to his largest desires. These stirrings of a higher life within us; these surgings of mighty impulses against the walls of clay, are the struggles of the unhatched bird for a new state of being. They are not, they cannot be, the mockings of some tormenting fiend; they are the powerful voices of an all-merciful, all-wise Father, who has provided a better world for us than this; voices of love and hope, in which He calls us to believe in that world, and prepare for it.

But, as the sparrow could not fly in the summer air, and pour forth the fulness of its own delight in song until its organization had been effected in the shell, so neither can man enter into full consciousness of the perfections of the spiritual world, until the proper spiritual organization has been formed in the material body; and, as the bird cannot enter into its new world

until it breaks its shell and escapes from it, so neither can man rise into the spiritual world until he throws off the material body, and thus breaks down the partition walls which separate him from it.

There is another legitimate deduction from these universal methods of the Divine operation, full of the greatest and surest promises of good to man. So far as we know, the plant, the bird, the animal, fully attain the ends of their being. The most perfect animal has no thought, no desire, no impulse even, for anything beyond this world. So far as they are concerned, the declaration of the Psalmist is true, "Thou openest thine hand and satisfiest the desire of every living thing." It is true for man also. It must be, or the whole creation is a lie. But we must take man's whole being into consideration. It is false only when we mistake the lowest and the merely rudimentary part of his nature for the whole. If you judge the plant by the blossom, or the insect by the chrysalis, you will come to the same false conclusion you do, when you judge man by his life in the material body. Everything in the universe points to the conclusion that the Lord intended, and still intends, to satisfy every spiritual want of man, as fully as He satisfies every natural want of the ani-

mal. He has made such ample and varied provisions for every possible want, that man cannot frame a hope in harmony with the Divine order, which will not be realized; he cannot have a desire that will not be gratified; he cannot conceive a good which he will not obtain; he cannot form a heavenly ideal which will not become actual; he cannot lift an aspiration above the level of his attainment. This is the Lord's promise in His Word, "Ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you;" and this promise is written upon the whole creation.

You have seen an animal in a good pasture lying in the shade or basking in the sun, and you knew that its desires were all satisfied; it had no dream of a want. Within the little round of its life it is content, it is full. Now, what the attainment of the animal is for the animal, will be man's attainment for man. With all his mental and spiritual faculties increased to an inconceivable degree of scope and power; with his knowledge and affections enlarged beyond the present capacities of the highest angel, yet every want will be satisfied. He will be full. Visions of glory and beauty will dawn upon his clear vision, such as no earthly eye has seen, and no heart conceived, and he will reach them, possess them, enjoy them, and they will content him. There are

only two words that express such a state: *Peace, Blessedness.* Peace within, peace with all around. Blessedness in the heart; blessedness in the understanding; blessedness in every faculty and every relation.

This is what the Lord promises us in His Word, and in His works, and it is a promise He will fulfil to the letter. But you must give Him time, and be obedient to His way. He cannot give it to you while you are in the material body. He cannot give it to you in this world, any more than He can give flight and the joy of song to the bird in the egg. It requires a spiritual world to satisfy all the demands of our spiritual faculties.

Now gather all these considerations into one; the limitations and obstructions to the soul inherent in matter; the nature of the soul itself; the universal testimony of the Divine methods in the creation; the certainty with which the Lord accomplishes His ends, with no excess of means and no lack of attainment; the Divine promises in the Word; and does not everything point to the absolute necessity of the death of the body? Is there any exception to it? No, the testimony is all on one side. The soul could not possibly attain those immeasurable heights of perfection of which it knows itself to be capable, without freeing itself from

the body. What we call death, then, is an orderly step in life. It is not a curse, but a blessing. It deprives us of no good. It introduces us to innumerable and inconceivable delights. Instead of fearing it, we should thank the Lord for it, and patiently await its coming. We should do our work here well, knowing it is the best preparation we can make for the largest blessings hereafter.

CHAPTER IV.

THE RESURRECTION OF MAN.

According to the doctrines of the New Church, Death and Resurrection are the same event in different aspects. The death of the material body is the natural side of it, and consequently it is all we can see while we are in this world. Resurrection is the spiritual side. The material body is left behind and turns to dust. Man rises out of it. He is withdrawn from the body as the hand is withdrawn from a glove; and when the separation of the spiritual from the material body is fully effected, he stands a complete man in the spiritual world, with all his senses and his whole organism perfectly adapted to it. He has lost no more than the sparrow loses when it breaks its shell. When the material body dies, man rises. He does not wait for unknown ages, and flit about nowhere, and no-body, waiting for a general resurrection of the material body, that he may crawl back into his old prison and resume his chains. He has left nothing behind him that can ever be useful to him again. The beautiful

moth never becomes a worm. The sparrow never folds its wings, closes its eyes to the new world in which it has rejoiced for a brief summer, and becomes reinvested with its old shell. So it is with man. The material body returns to the ground whence it was taken. "Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust." The spiritual body is raised up into the spiritual world, its proper home, where it will dwell for ever.

The statement of Swedenborg on the subject is as follows:

"When the body is no longer able to perform its functions in the natural world, corresponding to the thoughts and affections of its spirit, which it has from the spiritual world, then the man is said to die. This takes place when the respiratory motions of the lungs and the systolic motions of the heart cease; but still man does not die, but is only separated from the corporeal part, which was of use to him in the world; for man himself lives. It is said that man himself lives, because man is not man from the *body*, but from the *spirit*, since the spirit thinks in man, and thought with affection makes man. Hence it is evident that man, when he dies, only passes from one world into another." (Heaven and Hell, No. 445.)

He then goes on to say, "that man is man from his spirit, and not from his body; and that

the corporeal form is added to the spirit according to the form of the spirit and not the reverse; for the spirit is clothed with a body according to its own form; wherefore the spirit of man acts into the minutest particulars of the body, insomuch that the part which is not actuated by the spirit, or in which the spirit is not acting, does not live. That this is so, may be known to every one from this alone; that thought and will actuate each and all things of the body with such entire command, that everything concurs, and whatever does not concur is not a part of the body, and is also cast out as something in which is no life; thought and will are of the spirit of man, and not of the body." (No. 453.)

"When man enters the spiritual world, or the life after death, he is in a body as in the world; to *appearance* there is no difference, and he does not perceive nor see any difference. But his body is then spiritual, and thus separated or purified from earthly things, and when what is spiritual touches and sees what is spiritual, it is just as when what is natural touches and sees what is natural; hence a man, when he has become a spirit, does not know otherwise than that he is in his body in which he was in the world, and thus does not know [at first] that he has deceased. A man's spirit also enjoys every external and internal sense which he enjoyed in

the world; he sees as before; he hears and speaks as before; he also smells and tastes, and when he is touched he feels the touch as before; he also longs, desires, craves, thinks, reflects, is affected, loves, wills, as before; and he who delights in studies, reads and writes as before. In a word, when a man passes from one life into the other, or from one world into the other, it is as if he passed from one place into another; and he carries with him all things which he possessed in himself as a man, so that it cannot be said that the man after death, which is only the death of the earthly body, has lost anything of himself. He also carries with him the natural memory, for he retains all things whatsoever which he has in the world heard, seen, read, learned, and thought, from earliest infancy even to the end of life.

"But still the difference between the life of man in the spiritual world and his life in the natural world is great, as well with respect to the external senses and their affections, as with respect to the internal senses and their affections. Those who are in heaven perceive by the senses, that is, they see and hear, much more exquisitely, and also think more wisely, than when they were in the world.

"The difference of these external senses is as the difference between sunshine and the obscu-

rity of mist in the world, and as the difference between the light at midday and the shade at evening." (Nos. 461, 462.)

Such is a concise and simple statement of the belief of the New Church concerning that change in man called resurrection. It differs from the doctrines usually received in every particular.

1. It declares that the spirit is the real and only man, and the whole of the man.

The common doctrine practically regards the body as the real man, and the spirit as some vital principle, or motive power which animates the man; but of which, by itself, we can form no conception, and, therefore, it teaches us to look for the resurrection of the same body we deposit in the grave; it teaches us that the spirit comes back and reënters the material elements newly organized, and until this reunion is effected, neither the spirit nor the body is a complete man. The New Church teaches that man is a *spirit*, and has a *material body* during the first stage of his being; the old, that man is a *material body*, and has a *spirit*.

2. The New Church teaches that the resurrection consists in the withdrawal from the material body and raising up into the spiritual world of the man himself.

The old doctrine declares, that the material body is raised up from the grave and the spirit

brought back from wherever it may dwell during its separation from the body, reënters it, and becomes its life.

3. According to the doctrines of the New Church, death and resurrection are two aspects of the same event.

According to the doctrines of the old Church, the resurrection of the material body is to take place at some distant period at the end of the world. The doctrines differ, then, in three particulars; the *subject* of the resurrection, the *manner* of the resurrection, and the *time* in which it is effected. The New Church believes that it is the *spirit* which is raised; the old, that it is the *body*. The New, teaches that the simple act of resurrection is the *separation* of the soul from the body; the old, that it is the *reunion* of the soul and body. The New, declares that man rises *immediately* after the death of the body; the old, that he will not rise until some unknown period at the *end of the world*.

Having thus stated the doctrine of the New Church concerning the resurrection, as taught in the writings of Swedenborg, and, as we believe, in the Bible, I invite your attention to some of the Scriptural and rational grounds of this faith.

1st. We have endeavored in a former chapter to show that man and his spirit are the same.

It is necessary to keep this truth distinctly before us, that we may know what and whom we are talking about when we speak of the resurrection of man. We do not mean that man's tools; his material mechanism; his material garments, which were continually changing while they clothed him, are the subject of resurrection. We do not mean oxygen, carbon, nitrogen, phosphorus and iron, even when cunningly woven into nerve and muscle, into brain and heart. We *do* mean that wonderful spiritual being who formed these dead elements into this delicate and complex miracle, the human body; who lived in it, acted through it, carried it about in all the paths of life, preserved it from decay, gave it a sensitive and conscious existence, and so wielded it to his own purposes and moulded it to his own form, that multitudes have mistaken the dead image for the living being. They are now looking down into the grave for the re-awakening and restoration to life of those who have entered the shining portals of heaven, and who, now free from the burden of matter, are clothed with a beauty, and are enjoying a blessedness, which we who yet dwell in these tents of clay cannot conceive, and much less express.

2d. We are now prepared to examine our second point, which is: That this resurrection

consists essentially in the withdrawal of man from his material body, and not in raising to life the body itself. This would follow as a necessary consequence, from our first position, that man is really a spiritual being, and takes nothing of his humanity from the material body, not even his form. But there are positive considerations which tend powerfully to the same conclusion.

1. The original word *Anastasis*, translated "Resurrection," exactly expresses the New-Church idea of the change that actually takes place in man at his resurrection. It has no such meaning as raising up to life again in this world. It means a continuance of existence after the death of the body. Our Lord's argument with the Sadducees, shows that it has this meaning beyond question. But that no one may think this interpretation of the word is peculiar to the New Church, or that there is any attempt to wrest it from its true meaning, I will quote a passage from a sermon of Dr. Dwight, of New Haven, upon the Resurrection.

"This word Anastasis," he says, "is commonly, but often erroneously, translated *Resurrection.* So far as I have observed, it usually denotes our *existence beyond the grave.* . . . Many passages of Scripture would have been rendered more intelligible, and the thoughts

contained in them more just and impressive, had this word been translated agreeably to its real meaning. This observation will be sufficiently illustrated by a recurrence to that remarkable passage which contains the dispute between our Saviour and the Sadducees. 'Then came unto him,' says the Evangelist, 'the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection;' that is, that there is no future state, or no future existence of mankind. They declare seven brothers to have married successively one wife, who survived them all. Then they ask, 'Whose wife shall she be in the resurrection?'—in the future state? Our Saviour answers, 'In the resurrection,' or as it should be rendered, 'in *the future state*, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven. But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God?' or as it ought to be rendered, 'Have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God concerning *the future life of those who are dead*, saying, I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.' This passage, were we at any loss concerning the meaning of the word Anastasis, determines it beyond dispute. The proof that there is an 'Anastasis' of the dead alleged by

our Saviour, is the declaration of God to Moses, 'I am the God of Abraham,' &c., and the irresistible truth that God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. The consequence is, every one who reads the Bible knows that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were living at the time when this declaration was made. Those who die, therefore, live after they are dead; and this future life is the 'Anastasis,' which is proved by our Saviour in this passage, and which is universally denoted by this term throughout the New Testament."

The common idea of the resurrection, namely, that it consists in bringing the spirit back from the spiritual world, and in the restoration to life of the dead bodies deposited in the tomb, is not derived from this word. It was rather put into it to make the Scripture conform to preconceived ideas. The word has no reference to the body.

2. But again: There is nothing said in the Bible about the *resurrection of the body*, as there necessarily would not be if the original term means a continuance of life in the Spiritual World. There is much said about the continuance of life after death; or to use the common term, of the resurrection from the dead, or of the dead; but the terms resurrection of the *body* or of the *flesh* are nowhere to be found,

because there is no such idea or truth in the Bible to express.

This was the idea of a certain class of Jews, and when it was expressed, at least on one memorable occasion, our Lord corrected it. When He said to Martha, "Thy brother shall rise again," she answered, according to the common doctrine of the time, "I know he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." What was the reply? Was it an assent to this doctrine, as it naturally would have been if it was true? Did our Lord say, "True, the body you have deposited in the tomb would be raised up again at the end of the world. But, as a special favor, I will restore your brother to life now, though he will again pass into the tomb, and await the final resurrection?" No, nothing of this; "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."

The life and the death He referred to could not have been the life or death of the body. They must refer to the life or death of the man himself—of his soul. It is the same as though He had said, "You are mistaken, Martha, in supposing that the body is to be raised up at the last day. The true resurrection is that of the spirit. Those who are truly alive, who live and

believe in Me, can never die. And though they are dead, if they will exercise a living belief in Me, they shall live. I am," not I will be; "I *am* the resurrection and the life now, to all who will receive life from Me." You see how entirely the body is ignored in this reply, as though it was of no consequence. If a man is spiritually alive now, he can never die. His separation from the material body does not touch his life any more than the change of his clothes. And if he is spiritually dead, destroying the material body will not make him any more dead. The Lord always strives to lift men above the merely natural idea; to raise them out of the grave of the natural and temporary to the spiritual and eternal. He gives a new spiritual meaning to those terms and ideas to which the sensuous-minded Jew had attached only a material one. "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."

This principle shows us how we must understand the 28th and 29th verses of the fifth chapter of John, which probably contain the strongest statement of the doctrine of the resurrection of the material body to be found in the Bible. "Marvel not at this," the Lord says, "for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resur-

rection of life; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation." But just before He had said, "The hour is coming, and *now is*, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." And in the preceding verse, "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life." He "is passed from death unto life."

By those who are in their graves are evidently meant the same as the dead in the preceding verse, and there it is said, "The hour is coming, and *now is*." It is always present. "I am the resurrection and the life." As life is received from Me, every one is raised up from the dead. He is passed from death unto life. Here as before, and everywhere, the material body is not referred to, because it is no part of the man.

But suppose we understand it as teaching the doctrine of the resurrection of the body at the last day, how can we reconcile the declaration with the clause, "the hour is coming, and now is," in the preceding verse? Who or what is meant by all who are in their graves? Are all the generations of men who have lived in this world in their graves? We have the most positive evidence that they are not. Moses and Elias are not in their graves. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are not in their graves. And that multitude which no man can number, from every

nation, kindred, tribe, and tongue, are not in their graves.

There are many passages in the Bible which imply or plainly speak of a resurrection. The whole scope and intent of the revelation contained in the Word, is to teach and prove the Resurrection, the "*Anastasis*," the uninterrupted continuance of life in the spiritual world, after the death of the body, and how that life can be made the most blissful and rich in all spiritual blessings. But there is some difficulty about every passage, if by resurrection we mean the bringing back to life the material body. The passage in Job, which was once supposed to teach this doctrine, is now given up, and by common consent it is conceded that it has no reference to the resurrection of the body. And the passage in Daniel xii. 2: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt," was once claimed as teaching this doctrine. But it is now given up by the most intelligent writers upon the subject. The fatal clause in it is the words "many of them." Many does not mean all, but only a part. The words cannot refer to a general resurrection, then; and the most learned commentators confess that it has no reference to the resurrection of the dead.

The famous passage in 1 Corinthians, the last one which I shall notice, teaches a doctrine directly the reverse of the one generally entertained, and strictly in accordance with the doctrine of the New Church. Paul declares that there is a natural body, and that there is a spiritual body; that a natural body is sown and a spiritual body raised, that the body raised is not the one sown. But it is needless to enter upon a critical examination of the whole passage. The more critically and exhaustively all the passages relating to this subject are examined, however, the more fully they will be found to confirm the doctrine, that the resurrection itself consists essentially in the withdrawal of the man himself from the material body and raising him up in the spiritual world.

There are two resurrections, as there are two deaths. The first consists in the restoration of man to spiritual life. This is truly a resurrection from death, and is effected while we live in the body in this world, by the voice of the Son of God, or the Divine truth. When the soul, dead in trespasses and sins, hears that voice and obeys it, it begins to rise from the grave of sin and falsity, and to live. It has passed from death unto life, and will die no more for ever. This is the essential resurrection, and the one to which our Lord always refers. The only effect of the

death of the body upon such persons is to give them freedom and the most favorable opportunities for the exercise of all their faculties. The second resurrection is the conscious introduction of all, both the spiritually living and dead, into the spiritual world. These two resurrections are so spoken of in connection with each other, the first being described under the form of the second, that it is sometimes difficult to see the full bearing of all parts of the literal statement without a knowledge of this distinction. And much of the perplexity and doubt as to the meaning of many passages which the sincerest seekers after truth have found, originates in this duality of statement and meaning. The two ideas, the resurrection from spiritual death and the continuance of life in the spiritual world, are both implied in all statements upon the subject; sometimes one truth appears more prominent than the other, but, generally, both crop out in some form. They do not in any way conflict with each other; and when the whole truth in both forms is understood, every particular passage in the whole Bible will be found to be perfectly consistent with itself, with every other passage, and with the tenor of the whole Scripture, and the doctrines of the New Church concerning the Resurrection.

Right reason will always coincide with a true

knowledge of Scripture. If this doctrine is genuine truth, reason will also give her cordial assent to it, and we shall find indications and prophecies of it in the created as well as the revealed Word. There is no instance in nature of such a resurrection as the common doctrine asserts. But the world is full of the most beautiful examples analogous to man's true resurrection. Indeed, every organized thing passes through analogous states. The coarse rough calyx is as a body to the soul of the plant in winter. Man in this world is only the bud of what he will be. The voice of spring calls to the sleeping blossom, and it bursts the cerements of its grave, and rises up into the new world of light and heat, and blesses the earth and man with its fragrance and beauty. But the blossom is only the swaddling-clothes of the real plant, the seed containing the life, and therefore it fades and falls when the true plant is raised up into life.

The same stages of death and resurrection are still more fully exhibited in insect and animal life. The beautiful moth finds its anastasis; it is raised up from a worm, and emerges into a new world. The sparrow that flies in freedom through every field, was once folded within the narrow limits of an egg. The shell was its horizon and the boundaries of its universe. But at the voice of God, revealed in its own instincts,

it burst the bars of its tomb, and found its resurrection and its true home in another world.

So it is with man. He attains a resurrection for his material body, when he is born into this world, and a resurrection for his spiritual body, when he is born into the spiritual world. So fully and clearly does the Lord teach us in the visible things around us, what He is doing in the invisible within us; so clearly does He show us in the present what He will do for us in the future.

Now, in all these changes and resurrections, there is no instance of the dead body being raised to life. In no case does any created thing go back and resume its former status. The moth never becomes a worm again. The sparrow never goes back into the shell, to reanimate it. Everything moves forward, completes the cycle of its life, and perpetuates its species. But man, being essentially a spiritual, and, therefore, an immortal being, finds his resurrection by passing into another world, which is his proper home.

There are many inconsistencies and absurdities connected with the common doctrine, which its advocates have always found it impossible to reconcile or explain away, and many of them have been given up. It was once maintained, that exactly the same body deposited in the ground would be raised up. But this involves the idea that man is to be raised up with all his

physical imperfections and deformities. Most persons die in old age, when the beauty and vigor of adult life are lost; or after the body has become emaciated with disease, or crushed and mangled by accident or in battle. The particles of matter contained in one body have been incorporated into many others, and omnipotence cannot make the materials which belong to two or more bodies, belong exclusively to each one.

To avoid one difficulty, some have maintained that every particle of matter that ever belonged to the body is incorporated into it at the Resurrection. But this would make those who live to old age, perfect monsters. Allowing the materials of the body to be renewed once in seven years, which is the common estimate, a man who weighed one hundred and fifty pounds, and lived to be threescore and ten, would weigh twelve or fifteen hundred pounds, and Methuselah would weigh nearly *ten tons.*

Some have tried to avoid this absurdity, and the impossibility of the identical matter which composed the body at death, being raised up, by the theory that the same chemical elements, as carbon, nitrogen, oxygen, etc., will be incorporated into the new body.

But the essential difficulty with all the theories is, that they get only a material body, whatever terms may be applied to it, or whatever

imaginary perfections it may be supposed to possess; and a material body must be subject to all the limitations and imperfections of matter. It must keep man in this world; and however vigorously its advocates may deny it, the common doctrine leads to an inevitable materialism. Matter cannot be changed into spirit. If it could be, it would cease to be matter, and we do not get the resurrection of the body after all! If such a change is possible, there can be a spiritual body, and if there can, what is the use of a material one? Carry the doctrine out to its legitimate consequences and absurdities, and inexplicable difficulties close about the mind on every side, until its advocates always are compelled to take refuge in the Divine omnipotence.

3. It is not necessary, even if I had space, to dwell upon our third topic. If the first two points are true, the third certainly is; if they are not, it is of but little consequence when the material body is raised. But in all the passages of the Word upon which I have commented, you can hardly fail to see that the Resurrection must necessarily take place at the time of the death of the body. All the persons mentioned had attained their resurrection. But if any further testimony is needed, what our Lord said to the thief upon the cross would be conclusive: "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."

In whatever light we view the subject we are brought back to the plain, simple, and comforting truth, that man is essentially a spiritual being, that his resurrection consists in the withdrawal of his spiritual from his material body, and that this takes place at the time the material body dies. Death and the Resurrection are the same act viewed from opposite sides, and man's departure from this world is his entrance into the spiritual world, where he is to find his home and the theatre of his activities for ever. The voice of God, as it comes to us in the analogies of nature, teaches this doctrine in every plant that grows, in every insect whose life is bounded by a summer's day, and in every animal that lives; enlightened reason joyfully assents to it, and every aspiration of our souls finds in it the sure promise of the fruition of all our hopes; and especially as with the blast of a trumpet, with no uncertain sound, does the voice of God, in His Holy Word, declare it. So far as we accept it as truth, and bring it home to ourselves as a reality, earth and all its fleeting pleasure, and momentary issues fade away; life and immortality come to light; and only those attainments and possessions which will be of service to us in our final home in the eternal future, seem worthy of our labor or our love.

CHAPTER V.

MAN IN THE WORLD OF SPIRITS.

THE whole Bible assumes the existence of a Divine Being, a spiritual world, and the immortality of man. These ideas form the basis of its whole structure, and are interwoven into every part of it, but they are rarely taught in a distinct and formal manner. We are not told where the spiritual world is, nor are we distinctly instructed under what form we are to conceive it. There is but little said, except in a figurative and incidental way, about the employments of spiritual beings, their relations to one another, and their general mode of life. But the great truths are everywhere implied, that the spiritual world is a real world, that spiritual beings are real beings, and that they dwell in a state of happiness or misery according to their characters.

This method of treating these subjects has given room for the exercise of human reason and fancy, and the result has been a multitude of theories, ranging from the grossest materialism to the most ethereal and meaningless ab-

stractions. These theories have generally been based upon some passages in the Word which seemed to suggest them; and then they have been carried out according to the fancy and constructive ability of their authors. Thus, the common idea of hell as a burning lake into which the wicked are plunged, and on whose fiery billows they are to be forever tossed and tormented, but never consumed, is founded upon a few passages in the Bible in which fire is mentioned in connection with the punishment of the wicked. The happiness of heaven is generally thought to consist in rest from all active employment, and in the perpetual worship of the Lord. This idea is doubtless derived from some expressions in the Revelation, which represent the multitude of the heavenly host as surrounding the throne and singing songs of perpetual praise. But the more the subject is viewed in the light of reason, and the nature of man as a spiritual being, the less satisfactory these theories become. They cannot be accepted as full and final statements upon these subjects; and the doctrines based upon them are so conflicting with one another, and result in so many contradictions of the nature of man, and the general scope and spirit of the Sacred Scriptures, that they involve the whole subject in darkness, and lead many to doubt even the existence of a con-

scious, real life after this. It was this very reason, as we believe, that rendered new and fuller disclosures upon this subject necessary.

In the absence of all direct and positive teaching upon these subjects in the letter of the Word, we are compelled to judge of every theory by its intrinsic probability. If a theory of future life is presented to us, which contains nothing contrary to the spirit and plain teachings of the Bible; if it does no violence to reason; involves no inconsistencies with itself; satisfies the demands of man's nature, and is in perfect harmony with all the Divine methods of operation so far as we know them, it would seem difficult for us to reject it.

We seek this comprehensive, catholic judgment for the disclosures of the New Church. We do not ask you to deny the Bible, to reject your reason, to be blind to universal laws, or to seek refuge from any absurd conclusions in the Divine omnipotence. Bring to their examination the acutest reason, the maturest judgment; compare them with the whole spirit of the Word, and with all the Divine methods of operation; compare them with themselves, and the more thorough, severe, and impartial your examination, the more likely you will be to see their truth.

In previous chapters I have endeavored to

show that there are spiritual substances, and, consequently, that there can be a spiritual world, entirely distinct from this world; that man is essentially a spiritual being, organized of spiritual substances, and that as a spirit he is in the human form, that his material body receives its form from the spirit, and when it has performed its office, decays and falls off from it, as the husk falls from the corn when it is ripe, as the shell falls from the sparrow when it is ready for entrance into a new world. I have aimed to show that every law of God, of man, and of nature, demands the death of the body and the resurrection of man into the spiritual world. Let us now endeavor to follow him into that world, learn something of its nature, and endeavor to ascertain what condition and changes the same laws demand for him there. I propose to do as I have done in previous chapters, state the doctrines of the New Church, and give some of the reasons on which they are founded.

During the process of his resurrection from the material body, man is in a state of total unconsciousness. He falls into a profound sleep, and wakes in the spiritual world. He has no power to effect his resurrection himself. His soul does not escape from the body as gas from a vessel, by its comparative levity. His spiritual body must be withdrawn from the material body,

and this separation is effected by the Lord, through the ministry of angels, by a spiritual attraction. When the delicate task is fully accomplished, without any pain or consciousness on the part of those who are undergoing the change, man is gradually and gently awaked, and he finds himself among angels and friends in the spiritual world. He is in the same form, and he does not even know that he is dead until he reflects upon what he sees around him. He has all the bodily organs he ever had. He sees, hears, and uses all his senses the same as he ever did. He talks with those present, and walks from place to place as he did when in this world. Indeed, there has been no more change in his bodily form and organization than there would have been by going from one house to another in this world. He has only thrown aside the garment of clay. The spiritual body remains the same as before.

No change in his intellectual or moral character has been effected by his death and resurrection. He knows no more and no less; he is no better and no worse. Every one takes all his memory, and all his mental faculties act the same as before. He loves, hopes, fears, reasons, desires, reflects, forms opinions and expresses them. In a word, he is the same person, and he knows it.

The question naturally arises, What grounds have we for this belief?

There is nothing in the Bible contrary to this doctrine, but many things that tend to confirm it. Our Lord's promise to the thief on the cross, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise," is sufficient evidence that we preserve our identity, if we do nothing more. Moses and Elias were seen on the mount of Transfiguration. John saw a vast multitude from every nation, kindred, and tongue. All the promises and threatenings of the whole Bible imply that man is the same being in the spiritual world that he was in this.

I presume all persons who believe in a future existence will admit this as an abstract truth. But most persons practically deny it, by denying to man as a spirit those qualities which constitute his personal being, or identity. There is not the slightest ground for believing that a man would know *himself* if he becomes after death what a spirit is generally supposed to be. And this, without doubt, is the cause of the great fear many persons have of death. They do not know and cannot conceive what they will become.

There can be no identity or recognition where there is no form, or where the form is totally changed. Every person has some idea or con-

ception of himself. Suppose the next time you look in a mirror you should see nothing but what a spirit is generally supposed to be, would you recognise yourself in it? Or, suppose you see a distinct human form, but totally unlike your own, would you not say at once, "That is not I?" How do you recognise your friends? By their having the same form they had when you saw them last? If the change has been very great, you do not know them; you never know them, until you see some features you remember to have seen before. The same principle applies to things as well as persons. You could not find your house to-night if it was totally changed, with everything around it. The word identity means sameness. If we do not rise into the spiritual world in the same form we possessed here *we* shall never rise.

But not only outward form is essential to the preservation of our identity, but inward character. We must preserve our affections, our knowledge, our experience, and our memory. We preserve our identity as intellectual and moral beings, by comparing every step in our mental and spiritual progress with the last one. Gradual development is absolutely essential to the preservation of our personal being. We must be able to see how one state grows out of another, to know that we are the same beings

to-day we were in the past. All the laws of man's life demand, therefore, that he shall preserve his form and character and rise in the spiritual world the same being he was here.

You can hardly fail to see how simple and logical the doctrines of the New Church are upon this subject. They avoid all the difficulties and confusion of ideas which the prevalent beliefs produce by directing us to look into the grave for some part of our friends, and into the spiritual world for some other part, and to some future time when the two may be re-united.

The spiritual world being here, and man himself being a spirit in the human form—in the same form as the body—when he is raised up into the spiritual world, he stands there, a complete human being, having left nothing behind him but his material body. The veil of flesh is now removed from his spiritual senses, and spiritual objects and spiritual beings are now as real to every sense as natural objects were before.

Having thus followed man fairly into the spiritual world, without losing himself as a distinct personal being, and without violence to the laws of his own nature, or any opposition to the universal methods of the Divine wisdom, let us examine the nature of the spiritual world and learn its relations to the intelligent beings who dwell in it.

We have already seen that, if it is anything, it is a real and substantial world. Our doctrines teach us that it is divided into three principal divisions. Heaven, the world of spirits, and hell. Heaven is the abode of the good; hell of the evil; and the world of spirits is a state intermediate between them. It is called the world of spirits, because those who dwell in it are called spirits, in distinction from angels or devils. The inhabitants of the heavens are angels, of the hells, devils or satans; but all are called spirits before they reach their final home. This state is not like the purgatory of the Catholics. It is not a state of probation or punishment, though some persons suffer severely in their passage through it. Nor is it a place where the souls of men wait for the resurrection of the material body, as many believe. It is a state of judgment and preparation for the eternal home, of all who have passed from the earth. It resembles this world so fully, that when man is first raised up into it, he is not struck with any great change. In respect to the forms and scenery, the change is not greater than it would be if he had removed to some other place in this world, and perhaps not so great. He finds himself a real man in a real world. He sees similar forms, as real to his spiritual senses as rock and tree ever were to his natural senses in

this world. It lies next to the earth, between us and heaven or hell, and all from the earth—the good as well as the evil—must pass through it before they reach their final home.

Such, briefly, are the doctrines of the New Church upon this subject. Let us see what rational grounds we have for belief in such a world.

Heaven is a state of unsullied purity, and of that joy, peace, and blessedness, which only result from the harmonious activity of all our spiritual faculties. Every thought and affection must not only be in perfect accord with every other thought and affection in the same mind, but in all minds; and not only with the minds of all who dwell in heaven, but with the Lord from whom all this life flows. There must be no jar, no discord, no selfish or evil desire, no failure in the attainment of any end. Now, it is almost if not quite impossible for us to conceive of such a state. We may imagine a condition of things which we think would content us, but we often find ourselves greatly mistaken, even in this world. But when we come to take all others into the account, the problem becomes much more complicated. While we love and obtain what perfectly contents and satisfies ourselves, we must, at the same time, satisfy every one else. Now, can you find a hundred persons in this

world so heavenly-minded, so unselfish, so homogeneous in nature, that it would be possible for them to form such a society? Do you know of *two* persons who have attained such perfection? But this state must be attained before we reach heaven. Do you not think the best of men and women must undergo great changes before they come into this state? Must not their understandings become greatly enlightened, and their affections elevated and purified?

It seems to be generally supposed that all that is necessary to gain entrance into heaven, is the permission of the Lord. But if the doors of heaven were thrown wide open—and they are—and the Lord should say to every one as he entered: "I freely forgive you; I will not punish you for a single sin," and all, as they left this world, should enter, do you think it would be a heaven long? We must not forget that the character of every society is formed by the members who compose it, and that we do not gain any knowledge or any goodness by the mere act of death. Is it not evident that heaven is very remote from most of us?

We must remember also, that all changes of character are effected by our voluntary agency. We must learn what is true and heavenly, and do it, from *love*, not from fear or compulsion, before we can enter heaven. The kingdom of

heaven must be formed within us before we can enter into it. We find it a very slow and difficult work here; so slow and difficult that we often despair of accomplishing it.

But suppose it were possible for the Lord by His omnipotent power to transform us instantaneously into angels. Do you think we should know ourselves? I fear not. We might be angels, but I doubt whether we should know that we were ever men and women in this world. Is it rational to suppose that we can leap that mighty interval between us, as we are in this world, and what we must and shall be, if we ever reach heaven? The supposition is contrary to reason, to the nature of man, and to all known methods of the Divine wisdom.

Think of the great multitude of human beings who are daily and hourly passing away from the earth. It is estimated that thirty-six millions of people die annually. This would be three millions a month, and a hundred thousand a day. Every twenty-four hours a hundred thousand human beings, of all ages, sexes, and conditions, pass into the spiritual world. Among that vast multitude, there are many helpless infants, children, youth; many persons in the prime of natural life; many in the decrepitude of old age. How large a portion of them are heathen, utterly destitute of any spiritual knowledge, and with

very little knowledge of any kind! The infant is an infant still, the child is a child, the savage, a savage. All these persons are to be provided for. We cannot suppose the Lord deserts any of His children. We cannot believe that this vast multitude of human beings, differing from one another in so many respects, each one having wants peculiar to himself, are crowded together in one promiscuous mass. They could not form a heaven; they could not form a hell; for hell as well as heaven is a state of society determined by those who compose it. They cannot be instantaneously changed into beings fit for either state, without destroying their identity, and contravening all known methods of infinite wisdom.

Here is a large army of souls daily marching into the spiritual world, every one the object of the Heavenly Father's love. The greater part of them are weak and ignorant; their characters have not yet been confirmed in opposition to good. We can conceive of influences under which they might be brought, if they were to remain in this world, that would form them into good men and women. Can any one entertain the idea, that a being of infinite love and wisdom fails to provide every necessary means for the accomplishment of this work, when it is the essential end for which He created them?

What is to be done with the little child? He

is weak, ignorant, has many evil tendencies, but he has all the germs of angelic life. If he could remain in this world, he might develop these germs and make them a part of his real being. Does he lose his opportunity of becoming an angel, by his resurrection from the material body? He cannot become one, at once, unless all the laws of the human mind are changed. He must have the means of instruction. His will must not be destroyed, for that would be the destruction of the essential human principle. He must be left in freedom, to do what he is taught. And this implies the opportunity to exercise his affections. This is the only way in which his spiritual faculties could be developed.

What becomes of the heathen, and the great number in Christian countries, who go into the spiritual world without any knowledge of spiritual truth? They are children in knowledge, though adults in years. Do you not suppose that the Lord would provide for the development of those faculties, for which they had no opportunity in this world?

Here is a man, a type of a large class, who is a good man at heart. He means well, and strives to live a good life. But he has many evil inclinations to contend with, many bad habits to overcome. Where is there a good man or woman who has not? Where is the Christian

who is not oppressed, and sometimes discouraged, as Paul was, with this conflict? Who does not find that when he would do good, evil is present with him; and that he is compelled to maintain a constant warfare against false and evil principles? The purest and best Christian sees more clearly than any others, that he has these two opposing natures. Indeed, none but those in whom a true spiritual life has begun to germinate do see and feel this antagonism. What is to be done with that large class, who embrace nearly all the good? They cannot carry any evil or impurity into heaven. And, by the same law, they cannot carry any goodness into hell. Without doing violence to their own natures, they cannot be instantaneously changed.

I know it is generally supposed that a good man leaves all his imperfections behind with the material body. But there is no ground for the belief. The body does not sin. It is just as powerless to do that before death, as afterwards. Goodness and truth, evil and falsity, are mental and spiritual qualities, not material. But suppose men were instantaneously changed at death into beings of perfect purity and holiness, do you think they would know themselves? Would they be the same beings? Suppose everything that is not heavenly to be eliminated

from your will and understanding, your affection and thought, would it not create a great void? I fear there would not be much left of any of us. The result would be about the same, as it would to remove all the features in a deformed face but those of perfect loveliness and beauty. If the mind is a spiritual form, as we have seen that it is, it would be such a change. Who would know themselves? But the mind cannot be changed, except by its own consent and coöperation. A rock or a block of dead wood can, but living forms cannot. Such an instantaneous change, if it were possible, would so disrupt a man's whole nature, break all the fine and delicate laws of association, by which his thoughts and affections are related, and the continuity of his being is maintained, that it would destroy him. It would be like tearing out half the nerves of his body.

Between the vast multitude who are continually passing into the spiritual world, and the repose, purity, and perfection of heaven, there is, therefore, a greater or less distance that must be passed over. Many evil and false principles must be put off, many truths must be learned, and many good affections must be more fully developed. The good and the evil, so intimately bound together and consolidated by habit, must be disentangled; and this must be

done so gently, that our spiritual organization will not suffer by it. It must be done by our voluntary coöperation. In the larger part of spirits character must have almost its whole development. And we have no evidence that the laws of mind, in that world, are so changed as to make the development other than a voluntary and gradual process.

To what conclusion, then, are we inevitably brought? Do not heaven, hell, the nature of man and of the Lord, and all spiritual and Divine laws, so far as we know anything about them, *demand* an intermediate world in which spiritual beings may be instructed and prepared for their final home, and led to it? Is there any escape from this conclusion? It may be denied. So you may deny that the sun shines. You may say that the Lord has omnipotent power, and can effect these changes in a moment. But you have no evidence that He will. On the contrary, from all we know of the Divine methods, we have no right to infer that He abandons the relations of cause and effect, and acts in a purely arbitrary manner in the spiritual world more than here.

Admitting, then, as I think every rational mind must, that there is this intermediate state between us and our eternal home, we can see how beautifully it harmonizes with all we know

of the Divine operations, and how clearly it shows the protection and merciful care of the Lord for His children, in every stage of their existence, and how consistent the theory is with all we have said in previous chapters concerning the nature of man as a spiritual being and the realities of a spiritual world.

That world is here, is everywhere around us, and is separated from us only by the thin veil of matter. We are in it now, though unconscious of it. Man is a spirit in the human form, and when the veil of matter is withdrawn, the spiritual world in which he was already living is revealed to him. He has not gone to any remote place. He is not changed. He sees the beings who were around him, and just as near him, before the veil was withdrawn from his eyes, as they are now. He does not go among strangers, and find everything new and wholly different from what he has seen and known before. Says Swedenborg:

"The first state of man after death is similar to his state in this world. . . . He has a similar face, similar speech, and similar moral and external life. Hence it is that he knows no otherwise than that he is still in the world, unless he pays attention to those things which present themselves, and to those which were said to him by the angels when he was first raised up,

that he is now a spirit. Thus one life is continued into the other, and death is only the passage." (Heaven and Hell, No. 493.)

Who cannot see in this a kind and merciful regard for man; such provident care as infinite love must give to every one? You could do no less for your children. Your weak, imperfect human love would not only lead you, but would make it delightful to you, to do all in your power to provide your children with all the means for their instruction and comfort; to secure friends for them if they were going far away from you into some foreign country. Will not infinite love do as much? It follows, from all we have said, that the world of spirits is the place of reunion among friends who have been separated by death. Being in the same form as when they were in this world, their friends can recognise them. If they were nothing but what spirits are generally supposed to be, such recognition would be impossible. But if they have the same form and the same features, and if all persons carry with them all things of their memory, so that the most trivial incident they have ever known or seen can be recalled to them, it would follow that they could hardly fail to meet and be recognised by their friends.

When we found that we were real human beings, in a substantial human form, and were

in a real world, our first thought would naturally be about our friends who had gone before us. Would not the mother, whose children had been removed before her, first inquire for them, and rejoice with unspeakable delight when they were restored to her? Would not the husband and wife, bound to each other by the strongest and tenderest ties, but long separated by death, seek each other and rejoice in being once more united? Could it be otherwise? Friend would seek friend, and all whose lives had been united by common pursuits and common affections, would find one another, and according to the mutual affinities of their natures they would associate together.

This would necessarily result from a universal law of spiritual life, a law that operates in this world as well as in the spiritual. When we think of another, we imagine how he looks; we present him before us. If we were in the spiritual world he would actually stand before us. Thought is spiritual presence. Suppose, for example, a mother, when she was fully aware that she was in the spiritual world, should think of some beloved son or daughter; she would have in her mind a perfect picture of her child, and the being who was the counterpart of that picture would stand before her, not merely as an image in a mirror, but as a real presence, and

would greet her and embrace her with as ardent an affection as ever in this world.

There friend meets friend; families, apparently broken up by death, are reunited; the child is restored to the bereaved parent, and all whose hearts have been bound together by mutual affection find each other and associate together, according to their spiritual affection for each other in this world. What a comforting hope does this truth hold out to every bereaved heart?

But while the Lord has mercifully provided that the change from this world to the spiritual world should appear to be very small at first, that there may be no break in the continuity of our being, the real change is very great. We are free from the impediments of the material body. We throw off the burden we have carried so long, and the spiritual body becomes subject to spiritual forces alone. The senses are uncovered. No dead matter comes between them and spiritual objects, and their acuteness and delicacy are wonderfully increased.

A veil is taken away from all the mental faculties, the perception becomes acute, the understanding clear, the reason sharp to discern all the relations of various truths; ideas can be perfectly represented to the senses in spiritual forms, and the mind has every facility for rapid

and comprehensive development; and though the distance to our final home is great, we may soon pass over it. That depends, however, upon how much we have to unlearn, which is always a more difficult task than to learn, and how much affection we have for the truth. Some are but a few days in throwing off all that is not homogeneous to their essential characters, while others struggle along for years. Children learn far more rapidly than in this world, and they have this immense advantage: they learn only the truth, and consequently they have nothing to unlearn; every new truth is a step forward. They have teachers, also, who know how to touch the secret springs of their life, and to adapt their instruction in the most perfect manner to every state. And they are not only taught the truth, but they are continually applying it to life. They use it as they learn it. Thus they are prepared to become angels in heaven. It is necessary that they should begin life in this world in a material body, but it is not necessary that they should remain long in it.

This world of spirits is common ground for all who dwell in the spiritual world. The angels visit it when they can be of any service to any spirit who dwells there, and there is open, conscious, and delightful intercourse with those heavenly beings. In that world, also, they are

near to us, for that world is here, and they are continually performing kind offices for us, doing far more for us than our best friends here can do; and when we are about to leave this world, and take the next great step in life, they stand around us and assist us with the most loving and assiduous care.

Thus, in our journey towards our eternal home, we are attended by the purest and noblest beings, and there is no break in the continuity of our life. From conception to birth, from birth into this world to our birth into the spiritual world, and from that through eternity, every step follows by natural sequence from the preceding. There are no fathomless gulfs to cross, no steps to retrace, no dispersion of any elements that will ever be essential to us. We shall always leave behind everything that has ceased to serve us. We shall always find the world we dwell in keeping even pace with the development of our spiritual natures, that we may have the fullest and widest scope for the exercise of every faculty, and the attainment of every joy.

CHAPTER VI.

THE JUDGMENT OF MAN.

THE subject to which I now invite your attention has been the theme of much eloquent discourse. The poet and the orator have delighted to portray its tragic and terrible scenes; to hold them up as a warning to the wicked, and to present them as powerful motives to repentance and amendment of life. It is regarded by multitudes as the greatest and most dreadful event in human history; as the culmination of all human affairs, and the final settlement of all human conditions. It is the final settlement. Judgment is pronounced upon every human being; it will be pronounced upon you and upon me, and from that judgment there can be no appeal. Its decisions are irrevocable. It is of the utmost importance, therefore, to us to know how the trial is to be made, and according to what principles the judgment will be rendered.

Before entering directly upon the subject, let us glance backwards, and take our bearings from the principles we have endeavored to establish, and see what light they throw upon the ques-

tion before us. I do not wish to state personal opinions, merely. No opinion or theory is of any value unless it is true; unless it is according to the order established in the nature of man by infinite wisdom. If we can find that order, we shall find the truth, we shall find harmony; and so long as we follow it, we can never go astray.

In previous chapters I have aimed to show that spirit is a substance, and is capable of existing in various organic and inorganic forms; that there can be, therefore, and is, a real and substantial spiritual world; that man is essentially a spirit in the human form, organized of spiritual substances; that death is really his resurrection from the material body, and a regular and orderly step in life; a step he would have taken if he had never sinned; that he rises in the world of spirits, the same being that he left this world, and with the same character. He has the same form, the same features, the same knowledge, and the same affections. The infant is an infant, the youth is a youth; the ignorant gain no knowledge, the wise lose none. The savage is a savage still. The evil have the same evils, and the good abhor wickedness and love purity and truth the same as ever.

These human beings, in all states of moral, intellectual, and spiritual character, are pouring

into the world of spirits more than sixty a minute. At this rate the whole population of a vast city would be removed in ten days. If this grand levy of death was limited to this country alone, in one year it would take every man, woman, and child, and leave these great cities and this vast territory without inhabitant. These people, according to our belief, are never to return to this world. The material body is never to be resumed. Their resurrection is already accomplished. Their judgment must, therefore, take place in the world of spirits, where all great judgments have been and will be effected. The judgment which John describes in the Revelation took place in the spiritual world.

What is to be done with this great, seething, incongruous mass of humanity? If the Lord is a Being of infinite wisdom and mercy, He could not permit this vast multitude to remain promiscuously together. This would be a most terrible fate, unless their natures have become totally changed. If they are nothing but vital principles, or mere shadows of a shade, flitting around in the empty realms of space, being nobody and nothing, they would need no care. But if they are, as we believe, real human beings, with human hearts throbbing with human desires; with intellects thirsting for truth; with affections hungering for love; with passions

stimulating them to intense activity; they must come under the power of law, and be arranged into societies, in which each individual will sustain some definite relations to all others. Is it not so? They could not live together in this world without some discrimination of character, arrangement into classes, and the establishment of definite relations; and unless they lose their individuality, they cannot, there. Happiness would not be possible with such a commingling and contact of incongruous elements.

But besides this assemblage of opposite and repellent characters, there are many opposing and inharmonious elements in individual minds. There are few, if any, who are so good that they have no evils and falsities; and there are few, if any, who are so wicked that they have not some apparently true principles and good traits of character. A great number have no established character; infants and children certainly have none. Our happiness depends upon the degree and quality of our affections, and their harmonious activities. There can be no heaven where there is no knowledge and no affection, or where the various affections are in conflict with one another.

The nature of man, when he rises in the world of spirits, requires that these conflicting elements shall be eliminated from his character. All his

progress depends upon it. It requires also that the good and evil shall be separated, and that only those of congenial characters shall associate with each other. The happiness of the evil as well as the good requires this, and the Lord regards their happiness as much as He does that of the good. He has declared that He is kind to the evil and to the unthankful. A wicked man is never so unhappy as when he is compelled to live in the society of the good. He is compelled to act under restraint. His evil principles are continually assaulted. But let him get among his companions, and he feels that he regains his freedom, for he can act out freely his desires. He is less miserable, also, when his whole character is evil and false, than when it is composed of conflicting elements. We see abundant evidence of this truth in this life. A thoroughly bad man, a man who loves evil, and has persuaded himself that evil is good and the false true, is not so miserable as the man who knows what is good and true, but loves what is evil and false. The man who believes it is right to make the best bargain for himself that he can, as many men do, is delighted when he overreaches another and makes money out of him; while another, whose greed of gain overcomes his principles would be tormented by his consciousness of having done wrong. It is of the Lord's mercy,

therefore, that the character of the evil as well as the good shall become homogeneous, and that the conflict between them shall cease, when it can be of no more service to man.

In this world every one has two characters, a real and an apparent one. A bad man can appear to be very good. He can be very polite. He can assume all the airs of virtue and innocence; be kind and attentive to others; he can even preach and pray and exhort others to live a good life. Every one can conceal his real feelings. He can speak differently from what he thinks, even when he has no intention of deceiving. A good man knows he has two natures. Two opposite characters are struggling in him for the mastery. In the New Church we call these two characters, the internal and the external man. The internal is the real man. The external sometimes acts in harmony with the internal, and sometimes does not. We know from our own experience, from observation and history, that the internal and real character gradually gains the ascendancy even in this world, and brings the external, and even the body, into conformity with it to some extent. Vice graves its ugly lineaments on the face so clearly, that every one can see them. The habitual exercise of a pure and good affection, changes even a homely face into its own like-

ness. This work must continue to go on until the external and internal become one, and the whole being is perfectly homogeneous. Every one can see that no one could enter heaven until this perfect unity between the external and the internal was effected.

This external man is not the material body. We carry it with us when we go into the spiritual world, and when we are first raised up we can pretend to be what we are not. The hypocrite is a hypocrite still; and though a wolf in nature, he may and will try to deceive others by putting on the sheep's clothing of goodness and truth. The man who has been externally religious and devout, hoping thereby to gain entrance into heaven, though evil at heart, will still be devout. Every one carries his whole character with him. His character is himself.

The whole question of judgment is simply the arrangement of these people into societies; bringing them into true and orderly relations to one another, and leading them by their own affections to their final abode. I say, leading them by their own affections, for the Lord always respects a man's personality. He never violates his freedom. That is the essential human principle, and to destroy that would be to destroy the man himself.

Our doctrines teach us that this judgment is

effected in the following manner. When man first rises in the spiritual world, he is received by the angels with the utmost kindness, whether he is good or evil. All are welcomed alike. Every attention is paid to them and everything is done for them, that it is in the power of the angels to do. When the persons find they are in a real world, and are themselves real human beings, they begin to inquire about heaven, and desire to know whether they are likely to gain entrance into it. The angels then instruct them concerning the nature of heaven and heavenly happiness. Here the real character begins to show itself. Those who have the kingdom of heaven within them, that is, those who love the principles which constitute a heavenly life, listen with delighted attention to what the angels tell them; while the evil, who have no real love for goodness and truth, are listless and inattentive, and desire to turn to other subjects. Those who have an angelic nature delight to remain with the angels and be instructed by them; but those who are evil at heart grow uneasy and restless, and desire to leave them; which they are always permitted to do. But others of a different genius, and better adapted to their states, attend them and introduce them to various societies, where they remain as long as it is agreeable to them, and when they desire it, they

depart to others, and they continue to do this, until they find those who are in a similar state of affection, and consequently congenial to them.

This change from one society to another is not accidental, nor is it effected in an arbitrary manner. But they are drawn by a spiritual attraction; by the secret but powerful affinities of their natures. They are also at the same time undergoing great personal changes. They are in a world where all spiritual forces operate more directly and powerfully upon them than in this. The ruling love rapidly subdues all things to itself. The will and the understanding become united. The external becomes subject to the internal and the perfect form of it. If the essential character is evil, it will be acted out in speech and deed. All restraints will be cast off. Men will have no regard for public opinion, no shame for their wickedness. They will rather glory in it.

The will and the understanding being united, they cannot even think of anything good and true, and the whole form becomes changed into the similitude and perfect expression of their evil wills. The same principles apply to those who are interiorly good. All which is not in accordance with their ruling love, which is essentially love to the Lord and the neighbor, is put off. They are freed from everything which

restrained its activities. Their whole form becomes the similitude of their affection. It glows in their faces, and every feature becomes moulded into a heavenly beauty. It is heard in the tones of the voice, which express it in every modulation. It speaks in every limb and motion of the body. The whole form is the embodied and varied expression of the essential character. Thus the good and the evil are separated and drawn away from each other, by the inevitable attractions and repulsions of their natures. And the great gulf that finally separates them is in their souls. "They are judged according to the deeds done in the body," that is, according to their characters. Their allotment is not in any sense arbitrary. They choose their own lot. And the Lord does all He can for the evil as well as the good. But what He can do for each one depends upon what he can receive.

This is a very brief statement of the manner in which, according to our doctrines, every one is judged. Let us now examine some of the reasons on which this doctrine is founded.

It is executed with the most delicate and perfect regard to man's freedom. That is never violated. He is not forced to any course of conduct or bound to any society against his will. He is not driven away from heaven and the Lord. On the contrary, every effort is made

to bring him into communion with the good, and to make him happy. His identity and the continuity of his being is preserved. Instead of losing it, he becomes more perfectly himself: all that is extraneous to him is discarded; every thought and desire acts in perfect harmony, and even the outward form is the exact similitude of the internal character.

It is in perfect harmony with all we know of the nature of man as an intellectual and spiritual being. It is only carrying out to perfection, under the most favorable conditions, those spiritual laws which we see in full and universal operation here, and which, if man continues the same being, must operate in the spiritual world.

We know, for example, that we are drawn together in this world by similarity of tastes, habits, pursuits, and character. It is true, there is much that is arbitrary and factitious in our associations, and there are many obstacles that prevent those of similar natures from finding one another, and coming together. But we are always struggling against them and endeavoring to overcome them. A knowledge of the same mechanical employment, or the study of the same science, the practice of the same profession or art, draws people together into societies and more or less intimate associations, and forms a common ground on which they can stand.

When the tastes and habits are similar, the union is more intimate, and its bonds are stronger. The more interior the ground of sympathy, the more powerful the attraction. Thus, those who love the same spiritual truths, find in them a most powerful bond of union. These fine and delicate but powerful affinities, are to men what attraction is to matter. They are universal in their operation in every plane and degree of the creation. It is the Divine method of combining all beings and all things into some degree of unity. There are many obstacles to this unity from interior grounds in this world, owing to our selfish and worldly loves; and we are compelled to seek by outward restraints and force, by external laws and arbitrary punishments, a kind of formal or legal unity. It is, however, at the best, a very external and imperfect bond.

Can any one suppose that the Lord abandons His universal methods, embodied in rock and plant, in beast and bird, and in the inmost nature of man; a law so perfect that no one can escape from its influence; a law that is self-executing? Does the Lord abandon this law, reverse His own methods, when man comes into a world where there would be no obstacles to their perfect operation? How can any rational mind entertain so absurd an idea!

The doctrines of the New Church simply carry out this universal principle to its legitimate conclusions. They have the logic of the Divine order as it is embodied in the creation and in the hearts and minds of men. It is a conclusion also which every good and every wicked man must desire, if he understands his own nature. A wicked man cannot be happy in the presence of the good. Heaven would be a perfect hell to him. What delight could a supremely worldly and selfish man find in loving the Lord and the neighbor? In doing good to others? What pleasure could the impure find in purity? the proud in humility? the ambitious and tyrannical in serving others? Their whole nature must be reversed before they could find any delight in these heavenly virtues. What we inmostly and really love is what we call good. It is and ever must be the measure of our good, and must determine its quality. We can no more escape from it than we can escape from the laws of gravitation. Men desire to escape from hell because it is a place of torment; and to go to heaven because they think it is a place of happiness. But they forget that what is happiness for one is torment to another. They forget that freedom from punishment is not happiness. If every law was abolished in the land, and every penitentiary levelled with the ground, it would

have no effect in making wicked men delight in what is good. They would rejoice, no doubt, that they could freely indulge in their wicked desires. But these would soon react upon them in some form of punishment, and in the end they would gain no happiness by it. No. If those heavenly principles, which constitute the kingdom of God, are not formed within us—if we have not made them our own, by actual life —we can never taste a heavenly joy. We pronounce judgment upon ourselves, in the spiritual world, in the same way we do in this world. The wicked man seeks hell there as he does here, because he is drawn to it by his infernal delights—the only delights he is capable of enjoying; and he is drawn to it by the current of his desires, as a vessel is drawn to the ocean by the current of a stream.

The change which takes place in their own persons by which each one becomes externally the form of his own interior affection, is also the effect of laws which we see in universal operation here; and when carried out to their legitimate effects, they must produce the results our doctrines ascribe to them, unless they are arrested in their course in some miraculous manner and the whole nature of the human mind is changed. The soul being an organized form expresses its thoughts and affections by changes

of form, and even the material body conforms to its action. Under the influence of powerful passions the material body seems to be, as it were, fused in their fires, and cast into their mould. The same affection or passion always expresses itself in a similar form; and those forms are universally recognised as the natural expression of the corresponding affection. All representative art in painting and sculpture is founded upon this immutable law. The mind is the great sculptor, and, line by line, traces its own habitual moods and states of affection upon the body and moulds it into its likeness. Every passion and affection leaves its own marks. Invisible or evanescent at first, they gradually come out in clearer lines and more permanent forms, until the whole body becomes changed into their similitude, and the hidden affection is spread like a banner over the face, and the secret thought is proclaimed in every tone of the voice and movement of the limbs.

If this is true of the hard and intractable substances of the material body, how much more must it be true of those spiritual substances, which yield readily to the plastic forces of the will! If a man in this world who habitually indulges in any lust, is gradually but surely changed into the forms of that lust so that he becomes the embodiment of it, how much more

will the spiritual body become permanently moulded into the exact image and likeness of the interior and real affection!

When our doctrines teach, therefore, that every essentially wicked man becomes the form of his own evil, so that it is written all over him; flashes from his eye, croaks and grates in his voice; forms its infernal ugliness in every line of the face, twists the limbs and knots the muscles into its own deformities, and makes the whole spiritual organization the embodiment of its inverted, disorderly, misshapen and repulsive self, they only state a universal law; a law that the child understands; a law that you judge and act from every day. And if it is a punishment too awful to contemplate, to be for ever the embodiment of some infernal lust —to be so hideous and repulsive to all pure and good beings that they would shrink from us with horror—we cannot say it was a punishment inflicted by the Lord. He has ever done all in His power to save us from it. The law is beneficent in its action. It is the same law that makes the angel the embodiment of a loveliness and beauty which no words can describe and no art can adequately represent.

If these changes in the external form do actually take place in the evil and the good until the external and the internal become homogeneous,

you can readily understand that it would take no Divine edict and Almighty power to separate them. They would be a terror to each other. They would flee from each other, and thus the sheep would be divided from the goats, and each would seek his own companions, and his own home. And it would be done without the violation of his freedom; it would be accomplished by means of it. There would be no violation or suspension of universal laws, and the end would be perfectly accomplished, and by the simplest means, as the Lord always accomplishes His end. The book of each one's life is opened, for the book of life is the internal and real character; and each one is judged out of the things written in that book. And all that it contains has been written by the deeds done in the body; thus every one is judged according to his deeds. These books are opened as the Lord opens every book of life, not in a forcible and arbitrary manner, but by the orderly and harmonious development of what is really written in them.

This method of judgment is perfectly illustrated by the Divine methods we see in operation everywhere around us. Here are two seeds somewhat similar in outward form, perhaps; but internally they are totally different. How shall we judge them? How shall we estimate their

true value and assign them their proper place in the paradise of the garden, the orchard, the field, or the hell of fire? Shall we weigh them? Shall we measure them? Shall we compare their colors and form? Shall we send them to the chemists or examine by any outward test? They would all fail. By none of these methods could we discover their real character, which is written in invisible lines on the delicate and folded leaves of their closed book. There is only one way to learn their character, and that is to open the book and read their past history and the sure prophecy of the future, every event of which is written there. But how shall we open the book, sealed with seven seals? And if we could open it, how shall we read what is invisible to mortal eye, and written in forms which no finite mind can understand? How can we compel or persuade them to give up their history? We will plant them. The sun and the rain and the secret forces that pervade the earth and penetrate all things will loose their seals and open the book. We put them in a rich soil and a genial climate. When we first plant them, they have the same form as ever. But soon they begin to change. They may seem to perish; but they do not. A little stalk pushes itself above the ground, and delicate leaves begin to unfold from it. You cannot yet

tell whether it is vine, or shrub, or tree. You give to each plant the best culture you can. You use no partiality. Both grow. Branches push out from the increasing stem. Summer and winter pass, and yet you may not be able to read what is written in the book of their lives. In time their inward forms unfold into leaves; but every twig and leaf of the one is armed with thorns which pierce you. They cover themselves with the glory of blossoms. Both fill the air with odors, but the odor of one is fetid and poisonous; the other sweet, delicate, and grateful. You now begin to discover their real character. They are proclaiming it to every breeze. They mature their fruit. The one is pungent, bitter, poisonous, and fills every one who eats with pain and disease; the other is sweet, delicious, wholesome, nourishing; gives delight and health to every one who partakes of it. Now the book is opened: the meanings of its characters are all so plainly revealed, that beast and bird, and even insect and worm, can understand them. "By their fruits ye shall know them." How simple and orderly the process! How inevitable the result! There is no chance for escape. There is no room for error.

So the Lord judges man. He is not arraigned before some awful tribunal, surrounded with inconceivable terrors, every evil thought and sinful

act of his whole life brought before his consciousness, and made to testify against him; he has no formal, legal trial according to an arbitrary law, like a criminal before a civil court. Nor is the judgment pronounced before the assembled universe, in tones of thunder, and with flashes of fierce wrath, that the face of the poor sinner may be covered with confusion and shame, and his soul filled with awful terrors. His Creator, his Father, his Saviour, who has ever loved him with an infinite love, does all He can for him. He gives him every opportunity to show the best he is, and to obtain the highest good he can receive. He does not drive him away; he goes away of his own accord, in the pursuit of what he regards as his highest good. The Lord and the angels do not close the doors of heaven against him. He has closed them against himself by not having them open in his own heart, as the man in this world would close the gates of the sun against himself by putting out his own eyes. The Lord does not seek to expose him for the purpose of putting him to shame, but he gives him every facility for proving what he really is, by becoming the form of his ruling or essential love, that he may find his own place and be recognized in it; that he may not be a torment to others, and that they may not be a torment to him. The Lord does not condemn

him. He condemns himself. The Lord loves him, and would gladly draw him to Himself, and pour into his heart the glowing currents of His own life. But that would torment and consume him. So He does the best He can for him; and He does it according to the laws of His immutable and infinitely wise order.

Can you conceive of a better method of trial and judgment than this? It is in perfect accordance with infinite love. The tenderest pity and mercy itself could do no more. It is as certain in its results as infinite wisdom and omnipotent power can make it. The wicked can no more fail of condemnation, than the evil seed can fail of bearing evil fruit. By the operation of the same principles, those who have any love for goodness and truth cannot fail to receive all that they have the capacity to enjoy. The result is inevitable, and the Divine goodness, justice, and mercy, are equally displayed in the method and the result.

You will observe also, that according to this method of trial and judgment, the result is predetermined in this world, for it is in this world that the character was formed. The book was written here, as the history of the future plant, as it is embodied in the seed, was written in the tree that bore the seed. The world of spirits is not a place of probation, but simply a world

where many obstructions are removed, and many influences, more powerful and better adapted to the reduction of every external principle to perfect harmony with the essential ruling love, can be brought to bear upon every soul.

You will see also that this view abates none of the real terrors of a final judgment. If it is not attended with the picturesque and sublime, and I may add impossible scenes, which are generally associated with this great event, it is, if possible, more terrible and certain in its results, and much more consonant with all we know of the Divine laws, and with the infinite mercy of the Lord. And in its results it is in perfect harmony with the Sacred Scriptures, and in its forms and methods also when they are properly understood.

In discussing this subject I have endeavored to adhere to my simple plan, which was to take certain principles, generally admitted in some form to be true, and carry them out to their legitimate consequences, and in this manner show that the doctrines of the New Church are based on the immutable laws of the Divine order; and so far as we know, that they are in perfect harmony with them.

I have not quoted largely from the Bible, even when I might have done so, nor from any other book, because I have not sought to establish a

doctrine by any other authority than that of the truth itself. I may fail in so arduous an undertaking. I doubtless shall fail in the opinion of some. But all will acknowledge, that, if any doctrines of spiritual truth can be established upon the immutable order of the Divine wisdom, and can be shown to be in perfect harmony with all the Divine methods, so far as they come under our observation; and if they are in perfect consonance with the Sacred Scriptures, they must take their place with mathematics and other established sciences, and carry irresistible conviction of their truth to every rational mind. We believe the doctrines and philosophy of the New Church have this basis, and we can conceive of no greater service to humanity than to make them known, and to show the true grounds on which they are to be received.

CHAPTER VII.

MAN'S PREPARATION FOR HIS FINAL HOME.

It was the aim of the last chapter to show, that the judgment of every one takes place after the death of the material body, and his resurrection into the world of spirits; according to the saying of the Apostle, "It is appointed unto men once to die, and after death the judgment." The world of spirits is, therefore, the august judgment-hall, where man's trial is held, and the verdict rendered. He is not, however, arraigned before any tribunal, and acquitted or condemned according to any arbitrary law. He is simply placed in the most favorable conditions —conditions which could only be found in the spiritual world—for the evolution of his real character. The good man is drawn into the societies of the good by the power of his spiritual affinities. By the same power the wicked man is attracted to those of a nature similar to his own. At the same time, the external and the internal character become united. Everything is cast aside which is not in perfect harmony with the ruling love. Every one speaks

as he thinks, and acts as he desires; and finally becomes the perfect form of his own good or evil. The features of his face, the tone of his voice, the expression of his eye, his gestures, his walk, and his whole form and deportment, are the perfect embodiment and expression of his will. This great change is not effected in an arbitrary manner by omnipotent power, but in perfect accordance with laws which we see in constant operation in this world. Each person condemns or acquits himself by simply becoming what he really is. The wicked man throws off all his disguises; the good man is freed from all the natural evils which he had combated in this life, but from which he could never entirely free himself. And as the real character becomes known, unlike natures are repelled from each other, and like are attracted to like. In this way the judgment is effected, and the sentence pronounced by each one upon himself. The wicked are condemned out of their own mouths; by their own form, by their own acts, by their own choice, and of their own accord, they go to their own place. All the preparation they need is simply to be stripped of all their disguises. They need no instruction in the evil and false, and they will receive none in what is good and true.

But with the good, and with all who have

not confirmed themselves in evil, who have not established a decidedly evil character, it is not so. Being essentially good, or having the capacities for the reception of the Divine life, which have not become destroyed or permanently obstructed by evil, they can receive truth corresponding to the state of their affections. They enter upon a third state, which is a state of instruction and special preparation for heaven. This is the subject of the present chapter. I am to show the necessity for instruction, its nature, and the methods by which it is given.

The necessity for instruction is evident from the nature of heaven, and the state of those who are to be introduced into it. Heaven is not merely escape from the punishment of sin. If the Lord should offer a free pardon to every one, it would not make him any better. It would not form the kingdom of heaven within him. It would not create a single heavenly affection, or give the understanding a single truth. Heaven is not a negative, but a positive state. When we are weary, we think of heaven as a place of rest; and by rest most persons mean inaction, or at least freedom from the labors, the cares, the anxieties and disappointments of this life. And so it is. But this is only what it is not; the causes of pain which are not there. Permanent inaction is not rest; it is death. It

is blindness in the eye, deafness in the ear, darkness in the intellect, and torpor in the heart. The rest of heaven is not inaction, but the harmonious and orderly activity of all the spiritual faculties; an activity which does not exhaust, but rather increases our powers. All delight originates in some faculty of the will or of the understanding. Heaven, then, must depend upon what we love, what we know, and our ability to carry our will into successful effect.

A little reflection upon what constitutes the essential elements of happiness, will make this clear to our minds. We are happy when we attain what we desire or love. There are three things, then, essential to happiness: the will or love, which gives rise to the desire to obtain certain ends, which we call good; the understanding or truth, which shows us how to obtain them; and the actual attainment of the ends we seek. If either of these elements is wanting, we fail of happiness. If there is no will, there is no motive power, and there will be no action, though there may be the greatest amount of knowledge. If there are ardent desires and little wisdom, we must be subject to perpetual failure. If there is a powerful will and extensive knowledge, but some physical or other hindrance which prevents their ultimation in act, the whole soul is filled with pain. The

utter inability to obtain the gratification of our desires is the most prolific cause of our unhappiness.

Supposing these essentials to be secured; then the degree of our happiness will be measured by the purity and largeness of the will, and the extent of the understanding. For example: Here is a man of feeble will and little knowledge. He has but few wants, and those are easily satisfied. He is contented with little. He is happy according to the degree of his desires, and the extent of his knowledge. Another man has a powerful will, and a corresponding understanding. He has a wide range of affinities and tastes. He enjoys art, delights in music, has a keen perception of natural beauty, an ardent love for science, enters with real zest into a wide intercourse with the wise and good, is a warm friend, and his whole soul is attuned to the refined and delicate joys of domestic life, and all his faculties are alive to everything beautiful, true, and good in nature and man. A person with such endowments may enjoy more in one day than the other in a year.

Our happiness in this or the spiritual world, then, must depend upon the breadth and depth and purity of our affections, a corresponding extent of knowledge, and the ability to attain the ends our affections desire. When the will,

the understanding, and the ultimate effect, correspond, and act in perfect harmony, our happiness will be in proportion to their extent. The larger our affections, the wider the range, and the more various our affinities, the more numerous and exquisite must be our joys.

Man's spiritual nature consists essentially of the will and the understanding. The will is the receptacle of good, and the understanding of truth. The happiness and peace of heaven consist in the perfect union of the will and the understanding. As they expand they must keep equal pace with each other, or the balance of force is lost, and the harmony and peace are destroyed. As the affections expand by exercise, knowledge must correspondingly increase. We must be learners, then, for ever. The moment we cease to be capable of gaining more truth, we reach the limits of our happiness, and either remain stationary or, if our desires increase, as they must, we begin to be tormented with disappointments.

Now, if we revert to the actual condition of persons who have passed into the world of spirits, and who have not confirmed themselves in evils, we shall see the absolute necessity for instruction.

A very large part are infants and children, who have no knowledge of spiritual things, and no

character confirmed in opposition to good. Great numbers also are children in knowledge and spiritual life, though adult in natural age. They have never sinned against light. They never had any rational knowledge of their spiritual natures, and their accountability to God, nor any means of obtaining it. This, we know, must be the condition of by far the greatest number of persons, when they leave this world. They have lived according to the knowledge they had; perhaps have lived more fully in accordance with it than those who have had much greater light. To say the least, they have not formed any character in determined opposition to the truth, for they have had no means of doing it. They are, therefore, substantially in the same state as children. Many Christians have lived good lives, but have believed in some false doctrine. They have been honest and sincere in their opinions; they have believed what they were taught in childhood; what they have learned from men, whom they regarded as thoroughly informed upon all spiritual subjects. But they are mistaken.

We know that this is so. We know that our own views of the same doctrines change. We call the doctrine by the same name, perhaps, but it is not the same doctrine to us that it was once. No man but the most narrow bigot, can deny

that there are good men in all religious denominations; and no rational mind can admit, that the belief of every good man and woman is true in every particular, because they are exactly opposite in some points. It necessarily follows that they will need instruction.

But even the most intelligent minds are in doubt upon many subjects concerning spiritual things. There are very few persons who, by their own confession, have any distinct, and much less any rational idea of the nature of the spiritual world, of heaven and hell, and of what they themselves will be after death. Now, if it is true, as I have endeavored to show, that the spiritual world is a real world, and that men are real human beings, having gained no knowledge and lost none by death, the conclusion is inevitable, that there would be very few, if any, who would not need instruction. They would have the same belief on first entering the spiritual world, that they had when they left this. They cannot enter heaven with any falsity, for, by the very nature of heaven, every thought and affection must be in perfect harmony. Knowledge is not gained by mere entrance into the spiritual world. They would adhere to their belief with more or less tenacity, according to the degree in which they had confirmed it. And it might require much instruction and much posi-

tive evidence of its falsity before they would give it up. We all know by our own experience, how slow we are to reject opinions which have become thoroughly established in our minds. It is like taking away our very life to part with them.

The instruction given would evidently be in those principles which constitute the Lord's kingdom. Spirits preparing for heaven would be taught the existence of one God. How large a part of the human race do not know that simple and fundamental truth! They would be taught the true nature of His essential attributes. How little is known, even among professing Christians, concerning them! How diverse, and even opposite, are the conceptions of good men who have the Bible, and who are really desirous of living according to His commandments! Some regard Jesus Christ as God; others believe Him to be a mere man. Some regard Him as one person in a trinity of Beings whom they call God; and while they say one God with their lips, they have three distinct persons in their minds. If there is this difference among Christians, how great must be the diversity of opinion among others; there is the same diversity of belief concerning His character. He is all mercy to one, and all anger to another. To one He is a tender and loving

Father; to another a stern and inflexible judge. He cannot be all that men conceive Him to be, and they cannot come into harmonious relations to Him until they have a true knowledge of His character.

They would be taught what is really good and true in life. Many persons are honestly in doubt upon a multitude of subjects which relate to practical life. But they cannot take these doubts to heaven. That is no place for trial; for the rectification of opinions. The grand themes of instruction, therefore, would be the real nature of man as a spiritual being, and of the Lord as a Divine Being, and the relations which exist between all beings. We learn something upon these subjects here, but how little! How imperfect that little! How much it is blended with fallacies and positive errors! How various and contradictory are the opinions honestly entertained concerning the nature of heaven and heavenly joys! It is a very common doctrine, that the happiness of heaven will consist mainly in perpetual adoration and praise. If the doctrine is not true, how greatly disappointed those will be who have firmly believed it! If it is true, how many more will fail to find their true idea of happiness! Truth is infinite; there is no danger that there will be any lack of subjects upon which most persons will need in-

struction. Especially since in this world we see as through a glass darkly, and our clearest knowledge concerning spiritual and Divine things is mingled with so many fallacies and appearances.

There is every reason to believe, therefore, that we shall become learners for ever. But there will be many circumstances which will greatly facilitate our acquisition of a knowledge of spiritual truth.

1. We shall be freed from the incumbrance and limitations of the material body. Our senses and all our mental faculties will be much more acute. Being in a world where all things are spiritual, there will not be that contrariety and antagonism which we find between our thoughts and affections, and dead inert matter. We shall not be continually deceived by the illusions of appearances, and bound by the strong bonds of hereditary opinions. All the faculties being in clearer light, we can see through, and clearly understand many subjects at a glance, which we could not comprehend by years of study in this life. We all know something of the influence the body has upon the mind. When it is weary, enfeebled by disease, and filled with pain, we find it difficult and often impossible to think upon any subject, in a connected and rational manner. In

old age, men sometimes seem to lose all their knowledge and mental power. How great the change from the elastic and vigorous action of the mind, when the body was in its prime, and acted in perfect harmony with it! But the difference is not so great, as it will be between the highest attainments of the mind, when clothed with the material body, and when entirely emancipated from it. All comparisons between the most extreme states of the soul when in the body, must fall far short of the reality. It will be vigorous, elastic, keen, comprehensive, untiring, perceptive; so great will be the change, that men will seem to awake as from a dream; to have passed from darkness into light.

2. Angels will be our teachers. We all know how much a wise teacher can help us. And by a wise teacher, I mean one who not only understands the subject he teaches, but the mind he instructs. In the spiritual world men do not wear masks. The whole outward form is the embodiment of the inward life. The angels can understand at a glance, the specific spiritual state of those committed to their care. They can put themselves in their state, as it were, and see truths from their standpoint. They know, therefore, exactly what they need. And they know equally well how to supply it. They know in what order,

and by what processes, to lead the mind from step to step, out of any error, to the recognition of any truth. What an amazing help this must be! While here in the material body, using the clumsy methods of an artificial language, we often fail to make our exact difficulties known. The wisest teachers must often give their instructions at random, and even if they meet the case, we may not understand them; and so we grope our way along, the blind often attempting to lead the blind, and both falling into the ditch. But in the spiritual world, minds will come into perfect rapport with each other; and each will give and receive to the extent of its power. Such being the state of those who learn, and the wisdom of those who teach, they could hardly fail to make the most rapid progress.

But the methods of our spiritual teachers will be as wise as their knowledge is perfect. By the operation of spiritual affinities, to whose action there are no obstacles in the spiritual world, those who are in similar states of affection and thought would be drawn together, and a complete classification would be effected. Those whose spiritual wants are the same, and those who are the most competent to supply them, would be drawn into intimate relations. This would only be carrying out, under perfect conditions, principles which are universally operative

in this life, and the accomplishment of results which we are always in the effort to attain. As society advances in civilization and intelligence, it becomes more distinctly classified and arranged. This process goes on in business, in education, in social and civil life, in everything. The results, however, are very imperfect, because we are compelled to judge by external and artificial means. Whereas, in the spiritual world, state alone will determine our place, and our associates, even to the most minute particular.

It would necessarily follow that those, whose spiritual wants were the same, would be drawn into the same society. Thus infants, children, youth, and all of every age and state, would be arranged into societies or schools, where they could receive instruction exactly adapted to their wants. All of the same age, even in infancy, would not be together. But those of a similar hereditary character; those who needed similar processes of instruction, to repress every evil tendency, and to develop the true principles of a heavenly life, would be in the same schools.

It must be a most consoling thought to every parent, who has children in the spiritual world, that they are not to remain in the ignorance and feebleness of infancy; that the Lord has made provision for their instruction and for the development of all their faculties, into angelic per-

fection. They are free from all contagion of evil example, from the temptations of wicked companions, and the imperfect methods and the false principles of the schools of earth. They will never be taught anything that is untrue; they will never have any lesson to unlearn. Their delicate natures will not be subject to the rude and blind treatment that children receive in this life. The angels will love them with a tenderness greater than a mother's; they will know how to touch the secret springs of their innocent natures; and all their faculties will develop in beautiful harmony and order, as the bud unfolds into the blossom, and develops into the fruit. No shadows will fall upon their hearts; no tears will ever dim their eyes; they will have no hard and repulsive tasks to perform; they will never go astray. The innocence of infancy will never receive a stain; and the elastic, bounding joys of childhood will never be repressed. They will grow up into the manly strength and feminine grace of adult age; they will attain the wisdom, the culture, the comeliness, and the ineffable beauty and blessedness of the angels, by processes of order, harmony, and ever-increasing delight.

But not only are all shades of character nicely discriminated, and all specific wants perfectly met; the methods of instruction are also as

superior to those which are practised in the schools of this life, as that world is superior to this. This perfection does not consist in their being entirely different or opposite to the methods of instruction in this life. They could not be, unless we are entirely different beings from what we are here. This shows the coherency and logical consistency of the doctrines of the New Church; for while they teach many things concerning the spiritual world and the nature of spiritual life, which many persons regard as the mere fancies of a diseased mind, they will be found, upon careful examination, to be logical and inevitable deductions from the nature of the human mind, and perfectly consistent with all we know of the Divine methods. What better evidence of their truth could a rational mind demand?

As illustrations and proof of this assertion, take what these doctrines teach us concerning the methods of instruction in the world of spirits. "Truth is taught principally by representatives." Instead of describing a subject by words only, it is represented to the life. This can be done in the spiritual world, because thoughts assume form and become visible there.

Suppose, for example, a number of novitiate spirits had an imperfect or false idea of what really constitutes the neighbor, or of who is

our neighbor, as all children and most adult persons have. Instead of a parable of words, the actual scene could be presented. To teach this truth, our Lord has given us the Parable of the Good Samaritan. If the persons He desired to teach were in the spiritual world, the scene described by words in the parable, could be made to appear in reality before the eyes of the persons who needed the instruction, with innumerable particulars, and in such fulness, that a whole library could not contain a verbal description of them.

Or suppose the nature and delights of innocence was the subject upon which instruction was to be given. The angels could cause a perfect panorama of all living objects which were the perfect embodiments and representatives of innocence, not merely to pass before those who were to be instructed, but to surround them on every side as far as the eye could reach. And this whole scene could be filled with everything which the purified intelligence and exalted perceptions of an angel could conceive. Flowers of the most pure and lovely colors; lambs and doves, and the young of every living thing which represents this affection; and little children, of surpassing loveliness and beauty, would gambol and sport with one another in many various forms, so that the

very nature of innocence would be acted out to the life. And not only the abstract nature of innocence could be made to appear in various forms, but the origin of this affection as from its germ; the various methods of its development, and its various results, could all be represented by changes in the scene. There would be nothing wanting to make the beautiful panorama of this soul of virtue and essential quality of heavenly character, perfectly adequate to the states of every one who beheld it.

Those who beheld this representation would, also, perceive the meaning of every particular form, of every motion, and every change, and its perception would be accompanied with inmost delight.

No one can deny, that this would be a most effectual method of instruction, and a little reflection will show that it is in perfect accordance with the wisest and best methods in this life. The novelist and poet seek to accomplish this end in words, the artist with his colors and canvas, and the forms into which he moulds the marble. The teacher of science finds the greatest help in diagrams and pictorial representations of the truths he seeks to communicate. The most of you have doubtless seen the pictures or the engravings of Cole's Voyage of Life, and know how vividly he has portrayed

the wilfulness and confidence of youth, the illusions of ambition, and the certainty that the angels we desert in the morning of life, are our only hope in death. How much more vivid and powerful the impression such pictures make upon our minds, than the most forcible statement in words of the abstract truth. But if we could see the whole history, only a few suggestive images of which can be represented upon the canvas, acted out to the life before us in all the details; if we could see the bright hopes fade, the terrible struggle, the inevitable defeat and final despair, the effect would surpass the picture far more than that does the verbal statement of the truth.

The reason is evident. When we are taught by the instrumentality of words, we are compelled to make the picture for ourselves. And there are but few persons who have much skill in that. In all cases the *idea* or picture before the mind's eye, will depend upon the meaning attached to the words. The picture upon canvas is made for us, and we have only to open our eyes to it. Still the objects are comparatively few, and we may not understand them. But when they move and act before us in various relations, we can hardly fail to gain their true meaning.

This method is, therefore, perfectly adapted to

all the human faculties, and one which we all seek to adopt when we can. It is the Divine method, as we know from experience. The Lord taught by parables, which are pictures of imaginary events, painted in words. The whole Bible is such a panorama. In it, for thousands of years, the Jewish race is made to pass before us in all its phases of victory and defeat, of servitude and dominion, of glory and shame, from its rise to its dispersion. In this history every man can see his own life as in a glass. He can see his relations to the Lord, and to his fellow man; the blessings which follow obedience to the Divine commandments, and the inevitable and terrible consequences which must flow from their violation. What further proof do we need that the same method will be continued in the new and more favorable conditions of the spiritual world, for the perfect use of those who dwell there?

By another method, men are convinced of the falsity of many of the doctrines they may have imbibed. They are permitted to try them until they are convinced of their falsity by actual experiment. This is often the only way that we can be made to see and acknowledge our errors in this life. One person will not take the experience and wisdom of another for his own use. Suppose, for example, that one carries with him

the idea that the happiness of heaven consists in perpetual worship, as multitudes do; it would be more difficult to convince them by the force of argument of the falsity of this idea, in the spiritual world, than it is here. A simpler and more effectual method is adopted. They are permitted to test the truth of their doctrine by actual experiment. They are admitted into temples or are gathered by the attractions of a similar thought and affection into great multitudes around a throne, and there they worship until they become so weary and exhausted by the forced and long-continued exaltation of their minds, that they are perfectly convinced of their mistake, and are ready to be instructed in the true idea of heavenly happiness, which our Lord has taught us consists in doing good to others from love to them and the Lord. Those who use the talents given them, are the only ones who enter into the joy of the Lord.

In these and in many other ways, impossible in a material world, all who will receive instruction, are prepared for heaven. Infants, children, and the ignorant, are taught heavenly truths, and are led to practise them until they have made them their own, until their whole characters are established in heavenly principles. Those who are good at heart, but who have imbibed false doctrines from education or other means, are

permitted to see their errors, and when they see them they gladly reject them. Thus everything that is false is eliminated from their minds; the whole nature becomes homogeneous with itself and with the angels.

The progress they make is inconceivably more rapid than it could be in this world, owing to the increased power and freedom of the mind, and the facilities for showing every truth and falsity in its true light and form. Some pass rapidly along, and in a few days are ready for heaven. Others linger and yield up with more or less reluctance the false principles they had imbibed in the world, according to the degree in which they had confirmed them. But sooner or later, all who have not destroyed their spiritual life and become dead in trespasses and sins; all who are really good at heart, though they may not have been entirely free from natural evils and falsities, are prepared for their eternal home.

When the preparation is complete, when everything is removed from their characters which is repellent to the purity and perfect order and harmony of heaven, they are drawn to it by the force of those spiritual affinities which separated them from the wicked, and which now operating more powerfully and specifically, draw them to those of a homogeneous nature, and to their eternal home.

This is effected without any violation of their freedom, without any external and arbitrary power, without any force. Each goes, as of himself, though constantly directed by the infinite wisdom and mercy of the Lord. In effecting this end, the same laws operate that we see in full and universal force around us in this world. Every one preserves his identity and his consciousness of individuality. There is no link broken in the chain of his being. Through all the vicissitudes of life, from the cradle to the grave, from the grave to the open portals of heaven, we have been led in perfect freedom by a way we knew not. We have been protected from innumerable unseen dangers; we have been turned aside from paths which seemed to us flowery and leading only to good, to steep and rugged ways, because the Divine mercy saw that the strait and narrow path was the one that led to heaven; we have cast off the material body, when infinite wisdom saw it was the best time for us to do it; we have been raised up into the world of spirits by the ministry of angels; we have been instructed and led by them to renounce every principle in our characters that was not in harmony with heaven. And when this work was fully accomplished, they have led us in opening paths of growing beauty and ever-increasing peace and blessedness to our home;

to the home of the heart and the understanding, the home of friends, of those who love us, and by whom we are loved the best of all in the universe; the home of every faculty and every joy.

Now the six days of labor are ended. For us there are to be no more blasted hopes, no corroding cares, no weariness from heavy burdens, no vain regrets, no rending anxieties, no blind gropings for the way, no illusions of the senses, no shadows on the soul, no repulsive labor, no repugnant associations, no pain, no sorrow, no eyes wet with tears, no partings from loved ones, no jar, no discord in the universal harmony. There will be no more death. The former things are passed away. All imperfection lies behind us.

What lies before us? Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive. The highest angels cannot tell. But one thing we may know. With intellects elevated into a light so clear and brilliant that the brightest noon on earth is darkness compared with it; with their power so great, and their compass so extended, that all earthly knowledge is weakness and ignorance; with affections glowing with the intense ardors of the Divine love, and yet perfectly married to truth in the understanding, so that every desire

finds full expression; in a world where all without is in perfect harmony with all within; where all the faculties are increased in power beyond conception; in these exalted conditions I know the promise will be fulfilled, "Ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." I know that when we have passed beyond the present capacity of the highest angel, in our varied power to ask and to receive, we shall only be gathering the crumbs which fall from our Father's table. Our ability to ask, and our power to receive, are yet only the infant's knowledge and the infant's power. We have but just begun to live; we are just opening our eyes upon the riches of our Father's bounty. Eternity—eternity is yet before us; and infinite beauty, peace, and blessedness, await our desire to ask and our power to receive.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE STATE OF MAN IN HELL.

In preceding chapters we have endeavored to follow man from his resurrection into the spiritual world, through his intermediate state, the world of spirits, and to present the fundamental principles which determine his course, and the methods by which he is conducted to his final home. We have seen that his freedom is never violated; that he is led by infinite mercy and wisdom; and that the Lord always does all that He can for him, whether he be evil or whether he be good. As we advance to the consideration of his state in his eternal home, we shall find the same laws operating, and the same love and wisdom caring for him, whether that home be hell or heaven.

It seems to be a rational, and even a necessary conclusion, that the Lord's method of providing for the punishment of violated law should partake of His infinite mercy and wisdom, and should surpass all human methods, as His wisdom and power surpass ours. But men have always found it difficult to believe that the Lord

administers His government in a different manner and by infinitely wiser methods than man. Consequently, they have attributed to Him all the vindictive motives, and the external and arbitrary methods of human governments. The idea has generally prevailed that the Lord can forgive, or remit the penalty of sin, as a civil magistrate remits the punishment for a crime committed against civil laws. It has been inferred, therefore, that the pardon of sin depends upon the arbitrary will, or good pleasure of the Lord. Those who look more to the stern justice of the Lord, and by justice understand the punishment of the sinner according to his deserts, hold that the Lord cannot remit the penalty of sin consistently with His own character and the safety of His government, without some compensation or satisfaction for His violated law. Others, on the contrary, who look more to the Lord's love and mercy, believe that He will save all men from mere mercy, if not immediately, then at some future time, when their sins have been sufficiently punished. Each party goes to the Bible and seizes upon those passages which appear to confirm its views, and brings all its ingenuity and force to explain away the meaning of those which appear to oppose them.

But the question can never be settled in this

way. It cannot be rationally and conclusively answered without some certain knowledge of the nature of man, and of his relations to the Lord. Human governments are not the true types and examples of the Lord's government. We must learn of the Lord Himself. If we can discover how He rewards good and how evil is punished in one province of His government, we may safely conclude that we have found the principles and methods according to which He administers His government in every department of His kingdom. We shall have no difficulty in this; for there is one province in His government with which we are all more or less familiar from experience and observation. We all know something of the nature and methods by which we are rewarded for obedience to the laws of physical life, and punished for disobedience to them. And here we may find a key that will unlock all the secrets of the Divine government in every kingdom of life.

The Lord has so formed man that he is capable of receiving delight from everything around him. His whole form is a combination of organs or senses through which the material world comes to him and brings him delight. But in order to accomplish this end, the nicest order and adjustment of man's physical organism to the world without and to the world within him

is necessary and must be constantly maintained. Any derangements of that order must necessarily defeat the end for which it was instituted. So long as the true order and exact relations are maintained, we are rewarded for every activity with delight. Everything we hear, or see, or smell, or taste, or touch, gives us pleasure. Every one who is in perfect physical health is physically happy. He has no sense of pain, and can have none. So long as he obeys the laws of physical life, there is no way in which pain can possibly reach him. All his delights are the rewards he receives for his works—for his obedience to the laws of his life. The reward flows from the obedience. It is not so much *for* doing right, as *in* doing right.

But if he violates this order, and disobeys these laws of his life, he suffers for it. He is punished. If he eats or drinks too much or too little, or of unwholesome substances; if he exercises any organ too much or too little, he violates a law of his life, and the penalty grows out of, or flows from the violation of the law, in the same manner that the reward is the effect of his obedience. The pleasure and the pain are inseparably linked with the action. There is nothing arbitrary or uncertain in either case. The results in both arise from the same principle, and in their origin, intention, and effect, are

both good. Man is drawn to orderly action by the pleasure, and deterred from evil by the punishment; and both the reward and the punishment are administered according to the work, whether it be good or bad. The pain, which is the punishment for violating a physical law, does not come from without any more than the pleasure. It is not annexed to it, but flows from it; it is inherent in it. And the punishment consists in pain, in feebleness; in being deprived of all the delights of health.

Now, man viewed as a spiritual being is as really a man, an organized human form, as he is as a material being; and all his enjoyments and sufferings flow from the orderly or disorderly action of these forms, in the same way, relatively, that his bodily sufferings and delights flow from the abuse or orderly use of his physical organism. This spiritual organism, as we have shown in previous chapters, is as variously and nicely related to all spiritual objects and forces, as his material body is to this world; and its modes or order of action are laws of spiritual life. When these spiritual laws are obeyed, or we act in conformity to the order and constitution given to man by the Lord, happiness, and happiness only, flows from the obedience. When they are violated pain follows, and the duration and degree of the pain

are exactly according to the extent and degree of the violation of the spiritual law. The pleasure and pain are not affixed arbitrarily; they both flow from the action of the same law, under different circumstances, and one is as inevitable as the other.

But we are not left to mere assumption or analogy on this subject. We know from experience that it is so, even in this world. Every one knows that he is always happy when he feels kindly and thinks truly, and endeavors to act right towards all others. The love of others as surely brings happiness with it, as heat brings a sense of warmth. In the same manner hatred, or the indulgence of any evil passion, just as inevitably brings pain. No one can do a wrong action and escape the punishment. He may, indeed, escape the punishment which man has annexed to it; but he cannot escape the penalty of the spiritual law. A man may commit murder and never be detected. But can he avoid the consciousness of his crime? He may wash the stains of blood from his hands, but can he wash it from his soul? Can he forget? Whither can he flee from himself? What darkness can hide him? What hand can shield him from the fiery stings and biting strokes of guilt? The real penalty, as you see, cannot be avoided. The laws of natural and spiritual life are the same

in principle, and the rewards and punishments are administered in the same way. The penalty is inherent in, and flows from the act. And it cannot in any way be separated from it.

But this is not only true of that which is felt as punishment immediately, but of all the consequences which flow from it. Everything we do, whether evil or good, reacts upon us. Good causes a greater good, and evil results in some form of punishment. Kindness towards others begets kindness in others towards us. A thoroughly honest and good man soon finds himself surrounded with friends. The principle is seen in the great outward changes and facilities for business and pleasure that we possess at the present time. As soon as men began to turn their thoughts and affections to something useful—to mechanical inventions—what a change it soon wrought in all our relations to outward things! How soon they began to react upon us for our good in a thousand different ways!

In the same manner the evil passions and deeds of men have reacted upon them in some form of punishment. The thief and robber build their own prison, and shut themselves up in it. The outrages of evil men upon others render their confinement necessary to the general welfare, and thus the whole community stands arrayed against the evil. When a man

of violent and vindictive passions gives vent to them in words and deeds of violence against other men, he soon calls down upon himself curses and blows, and even death. These are illustrations of the general principle, that the life of every one reacts upon him either as reward or punishment, according to his deeds, so that it is strictly true that punishment flows from the evil, even when it seems to come from others.

But will it not be different when we come into the spiritual world? How can it be, if men are men, if their happiness flows from their activities, from the exercise of their affections? It is evident that it cannot, for, so far as we know, there is but one way of being happy, and that is by the exercise of some affection. If a person has no good affections, how can he exercise them? He could as easily enjoy all the delights of seeing without eyes. If the indulgence of evil affections must, in the nature of things, cause pain, how can the evil escape suffering? Passing into the spiritual world does not change a man's nature; consequently the laws of life must be the same there that they are here. Man is a spirit now.

Suppose the Lord should say to every one when he comes into the spiritual world, "I withdraw all charges against you. I will not punish

you for anything you have done. Enter heaven. Do as you please. Enjoy yourself as you best can." Do you suppose that would make the evil man good? He is the embodiment of selfish and worldly loves. Do you suppose he would now immediately reverse his whole nature and begin to love the Lord and his brother supremely? No; no more than thieves and murderers are changed to saints by receiving a free pardon for their crimes. Suppose the prison doors of all the penitentiaries in the land were opened to-morrow, and there was a general jail delivery throughout the Union, do you think the malefactors now confined in prison would feel grateful for the clemency of the governments and return to virtue? No; they would rush into worse crimes as the fear of punishment was removed.

We may safely conclude, therefore, that punishment is good for the wicked, and that it must inevitably flow from evil, and that the Lord's government is everywhere the same in principle. The origin of punishment, then, is in the evil. Nor does it come from any other source, however many channels it may pass through, and however various the forms it may assume before it reaches the doer of the evil. Consequently, the doctrines of the New Church accord with universal laws, in teaching that the Lord pun-

ishes no one. He is love and mercy itself, and no evil or pain can come from Him. No one thinks of attributing his physical sufferings to the Lord. When we expose ourselves to a greater degree of heat or cold than the nature of our material bodies can sustain, we are punished for it, more or less severely, according to the degree of our exposure—sometimes with the entire loss of limbs or life. But no one would think of saying that the Lord sent that suffering and mutilation because we had violated His laws. Our punishment had its origin in our disobedience, in the violation of a good law. So it is with every pain human beings suffer. No suffering does or can come from the Lord. He is not the author of evil or of its punishment.

It follows, as a necessary consequence, from this fundamental principle, that no one is, or can be punished for an evil after it has been removed. The Lord does not lay up charges and penalties against men. He does not give them license in this world, and punish them in the next for it. That is a most horrible doctrine. *Men are not punished in the spiritual world for what they do in this, but for what they do there.* It is true that the evil life and habits which men confirm here become their life there, and lead them to do evil and thus to be pun-

ished. But when they cease to do evil, they cease to suffer for it. Men often jump to conclusions from the truth, that neither facts nor experience warrant. They say, "If I shall not be punished in the spiritual world for what I do in this, when I get there I will stop sinning and thus I will escape all punishment." But why not stop now? If you should express the answer that is in your heart, you would say, "Because I wish to indulge in selfish and worldly delights a while longer." Should we not have the same desires and the same delights there? We must not forget that we shall be ourselves, and not beings of another nature, when we rise in the spiritual world. It does not change our characters to throw off the material body, but rather makes us more completely ourselves. Difficult as we find it to change now, it will be impossible then, for the understanding and will will be one there, and we can think only of what we love. We cannot be outwardly good and inwardly evil. There are two consequences which follow every evil: one is the immediate pain it causes, and the other the habit of evil which it confirms. The truth, then, that no one is punished in the spiritual world for what he does in this, gives no license to sin, but makes its consequences more severe and terrible.

But I proceed, in the second place, to state

how the wicked are punished in the spiritual world. In a previous chapter I showed that those who are inherently wicked remain in the world of spirits until they have put off all that is not homogeneous to their ruling love, so that every evil affection has its corresponding falsity, and the spirit finds nothing in himself that opposes or in any way prevents him from acting out his essential nature. He throws off all appearances of good; for in the spiritual world those who are in good have a perception of everything that is opposite to their love, so that no disguises or subterfuges avail any one. Every one is known for what he is, and is drawn by an irresistible attraction to those of similar affection. "His external form corresponds to his internal, and is its exact type and effigy; consequently, it is then known as soon as seen, what sort of a spirit he is, not only by his countenance but by his person, and also by his speech and by his gestures; and as, likewise, he is now in his intrinsic identity, he cannot abide anywhere but where those like himself dwell. For in the spiritual world there is a complete communication of affections and of the thoughts thence originating, on which account a spirit is conducted as if of himself, because from his own affection and its delights, to those who are like him." (Heaven and Hell, No. 552.)

Being thus openly introduced into the society of those of a similar character, it is not difficult to determine what would be the inevitable result. We must keep in mind that the same principles operate in the spiritual world that operate here, only they are more clearly and freely developed. The life of spirits is as real, and the ends they seek to obtain are as real and seem to them much more desirable, than the ends men seek in this world. And they pursue them through various instrumentalities; they use each other to accomplish their purposes, and to do that, they must present motives; they must offer some good, or create some fear.

Under these circumstances, imagine a company of human beings, in which each one was fired with the lust of dominion, claimed homage for himself, and desired to make every one serve him. You see at once that there could be no bond of union among them but fear. The interests of each one are hostile to all the others. There would be jealousies, envyings, hatreds, fears; the exercise of tyrannical powers, the most cruel punishments, and the most abject servitude. No one could act out his nature freely without coming in contact with all the others, and calling down their vengeance upon him. Each one would be kept in torment, either from the fear of injury, or from the desire to

act out his evil love, or from the inevitable punishment that would follow from acting according to it. It would be impossible for him to escape punishment in any other way than by submission, and quietly surrendering himself to be a slave.

There have been, and there are still, such hells in this world. History furnishes us with the most mournful and shocking accounts of the tyrannies and cruelties inflicted upon each other by those who had the power or desired to obtain it. How many millions of human beings have been slaughtered, how many have been immured in dungeons, and subjected to the most terrible tortures! All tyrannical governments could furnish us with abundant examples to illustrate this principle. All the societies of the hells are governed by some one who seeks the position from his indomitable love of rule, and by his power to subdue and command others. The ruler would obtain his position in the same manner that he would in a band of pirates and robbers. He who had the greatest cunning and strength, the most daring and energy, and the greatest skill and power in command, would seize the chief power and rule. But every such government must be a tyranny, and the only motive to obedience, fear. The lust for dominion in each one would lead to perpetual plotting and counterplotting, to

commotions, insurrections, and consequent punishments.

Suppose, again, a society in which every one's ruling love was cruelty, or the delight of inflicting pain upon others (and such dispositions are not unknown in this world), the consequence must inevitably be the misery of every one. For no one could act out his nature without inflicting pain upon some one else, and this would bring down vengeance upon his own head. The happiness of every member of such a community would consist in disturbing, annoying, fretting, exciting fears, opposing the delights of others, and by a cunning, deceit, and craftiness, known only to spirits, inflicting pain. Would not such a condition of things keep every one in torment?

In the same manner we may take any other evil, and carry it out to its legitimate consequences. Collect together a number of persons who are the embodiments of it, and every one who knows anything of the nature of evil must know, that nothing but punishment, or suffering in some form, could flow from such a society. We see that it is so here; it must be so in the nature of things. We see, also, that the punishment does not come from the good, but from the evil. They delight to inflict it upon one another, and if they were not re-

strained by fear, they would, if it were possible, destroy one another. Their ruling loves all impel them to act in opposition to others. As they love nothing but themselves, they can act from no other motives, and as their understanding and will have become one, they can think nothing but what they love; the only restraint that can have any weight with them is fear. Their fears, also, can be excited only by their sufferings. The state of the wicked is such then, that they never can act from affection, without rousing up opposition and bringing back upon themselves some form of suffering. If they refrain from evil, they must do so from compulsion or fear. All that keeps them within bounds is restraint of some kind. They are all, literally, the vilest slaves. And the punishment of each one is exactly adapted to his state, and never passes beyond the severity necessary to keep him in his proper place, and to prevent him from injuring others. The kinds of punishment the wicked inflict upon one another are as numerous as the varieties of evils in which they are principled.

It is a law of the spiritual world that everything that surrounds its inhabitants is in exact correspondence with their state or character. The scenery of the hells, then, must be composed of all that is essentially repulsive and

horrible. Its inhabitants dwell in darkness, or what is darkness compared with the light of heaven, because, like owls and bats, they cannot bear the light. They are themselves horribly deformed monsters, because every one is the form of his own evil, and they dwell in dens and holes, in filthy and dilapidated hovels, surrounded with stagnant marshes, in whose slime every hideous and deformed thing that represents their own evils is bred. Some dwell in deserts of sand, or wildernesses filled with savage beasts, and still more savage spirits. The evil of every one begets its corresponding phantasies, which people his world, and haunt and terrify him.

When we consider that the senses of spirits are much more acute than they were when clothed with flesh in this world; that their power is vastly increased, and their cunning and malignant arts are so great that they cannot be described in human language, and that many of them are unknown even to the most malicious in this world; that there are no restraints but fear, and no love for anything but evil, and no thought but how to accomplish it, we can well imagine that their condition is so miserable, that it may well fill our minds with horror to think of it. And yet, perhaps, we love the same evils, and if we were left in freedom to

seek our like we should, of our own accord, join some of these miserable societies, and become slaves like them.

It may be proper here to remark, that none of the punishments of the wicked consist in remorse, or in the stings of conscience. They have no conscience, and they are, therefore, incapable of remorse. Every man who has a conscience goes to heaven. The possession of a conscience shows that the Lord has some hold upon him. The wicked do not care for heaven. Their only desire is to indulge in their own lusts, and their only grief consists in the restraints that are imposed upon them, and the punishments which flow from their evils.

It is sometimes supposed that the wicked will mourn over their past folly, and repent, though their repentance will not avail them, because their day of probation is over. But their evils cause them no regret. They rather glory in their shame. They do not mourn over the past; they only mourn that they cannot gratify their lusts in the present. One sincere and earnest desire to know the truth and to live it would fling the gates of hell wide open, and release its possessor from the eternal prison-house. But no such desire is ever breathed in those gloomy and terrible abodes; for no one who is capable of such an affection ever goes there.

No. The life of the hells, which is essential death, is a life of purely selfish and worldly lusts.

But is there no escape from hell? Will not its inhabitants finally see the folly of evil, and cease to do it? Will they not become instructed in the truth and raised to heaven? Some believe that they will; but their belief is not founded upon revelation, or reason, or a true knowledge of the nature of man. There are many reasons why it is impossible in the nature and constitution of things, that such a change should take place.

1. A spirit, who is essentially evil, cannot be taught what is true. He cannot think what is true, or have any desire to live a good life. The only ground for teaching any one the truth in this world is, because the will and the understanding are separated, and we can see and speak the truth even when we have no will to do it. If a man could think only about what he loved; that is, if his thoughts flowed only from his affections, and were the form and expression of them as they are in the spirit world, he could not be reformed here. There would be no possibility of saving him.

2. Again, a spirit is an organized human form, entirely inverted by evil. A direct influx of the Divine life into such a form would rend it to

pieces; because its currents would flow in a direction entirely contrary to the currents of the evil life. An evil spirit could not breathe the air of heaven. If it were possible for him to attempt it, he would gasp like a fish out of water, or would be so tormented that the deepest hell would be a comfortable place compared with it.

3. There is a proper time in the order of the creation of every being and thing, when the different parts that compose it must be inserted, and commence their growth; and if they are not inserted in their proper time, they never can be. Suppose a child is born into this world without eyes; is there any possibility that it can ever see? We know there is none. The Lord cannot, from immediate mercy, or the exercise of arbitrary, omnipotent power, give eyes to the child or the man; for He can do it only in its own orderly time and way. He cannot go back. As the first steps in the organization of our material bodies were taken before we were born into the world, so the first steps in our spiritual organization must be taken before we are born into the spiritual world. And by spiritual organization I mean the formation of that interior plane of the mind which can receive the Divine love and wisdom in true order. In other words, a man must be "born

again," or he cannot see the kingdom of God. But there is no chance for him to be born again in the spiritual world. He has passed that state in his existence when such a work could be begun. There is no basis for the new spiritual organism to rest upon. We might as well begin at the top of an arch to construct it, or plant our seeds in the air, or hope to obtain fruit before we have blossoms. A spirit is not part memory, part understanding, part reason, and part will; but he is all will. The only hold he has upon anything is his affection for it. Nor does he desire anything else, or think of anything else. I repeat, that plane in his nature, in which goodness and truth can be implanted, is wanting, and can never be supplied.

Some think this doctrine militates against the Divine benevolence. If they can believe that all will be restored to happiness and heaven some time in the vast futurity, no matter how remote, they are content. It saves the Divine character, they think, and saves man. But they cannot endure the thought that any one will suffer eternally; eternity is too long, they say. But it is not; eternity is neither long nor short. It has no reference to time whatever; it is a state of the soul. Spirits do not think how long they have been in hell or heaven, and how

long they will have to remain there. Eternity is *now*. They do not think or care for to-morrow or yesterday; they are absorbed in the present. They are seeking to gratify their lusts or to escape punishment, and they have no thought for anything else. The fact, therefore, that they will never be delivered from this state, does not militate against the Divine mercy. *Never* is a thought that is impossible to beings who are entirely removed from the laws of time and space. The existence of evil for thousands of years, or even for a moment, is just as strong an argument against the Divine benevolence as is its existence to eternity. Nor is it to be supposed that the wicked think their condition one of continual suffering. They have their infernal delights, and they can conceive of no other. They are not always undergoing punishment. Do you not suppose the thief and the robber are delighted when they succeed in a skilful theft or a bold robbery? Does not the man who loves money more than honesty feel a delight when he has defrauded his neighbors? Is not revenge sweet to the revengeful? Do no men voluntarily dwell in caves and dens, or in hovels, where they are surrounded by all forms of foul and hateful things? Are there not hells in every city, where the darkest crimes are committed, where evil passions rage; hells in which

men and women voluntarily immerse themselves? Why do not those miserable beings leave them if they take no delight in them? Why do we not find them engaging in some useful employment, frequenting churches and commencing the life of heaven; they are not held in these hells by any external force? Is it not because they take delight in the society and practices they find there? and find no pleasure in the society and employments of the pure and good? The same principle applies to the inhabitants of the hells. They have no desire to change. They cannot conceive of any other happiness than what they enjoy. They do not consider existence a curse to them. They do not pray for extinction. There is no one who does not, on the whole, regard his life as a blessing. I cannot conceive that the Lord ever created a human being who does not, or who would voluntarily resign it. That all do not go to heaven, then, no more militates against the Divine goodness, than it does that all are not equally happy in this life or in heaven.

But every one does go—I will not say where he can be the happiest—but where he will be the least miserable. A wicked man has his delights, but only a good man can be happy, for happiness is not a proper term for the delights of the wicked. The hells are just as clear an

evidence of the Lord's goodness as the heavens; as in this world, the jail and the penitentiary are as clear an evidence of the benevolence of the state as asylums for the blind or orphans. It is better both for himself and for others, that a man who will not voluntarily refrain from inflicting injury upon others, should be imprisoned. In the penitentiary he can be of some use to others, and he has not the same opportunity to injure his own nature. So it is with the hells. They are provided by the Lord's mercy and love as truly as the heavens are, and exist according to the same law. They are the best that can be done for those in that state. And what the Lord can do for any human being depends upon his state and capacity to be affected by the Divine life.

Evil is considered by some as an imperfect state of goodness, and the idea is entertained that the worst men may develop into angels. But evil is not imperfect good, and falsity is not imperfect truth; and the one cannot be developed into the other. Could a falsehood become a truth by development? Can you cure a man by developing his disease? Can sour be changed to sweet, and cold to heat, by developing them? How many degrees of cold would it take to make one warm and comfortable? Good and evil, truth and falsity, are the oppo-

sites of each other, and the more you develop either the more remote they become.

A man may be internally good and have many external imperfections. Then there is ground for development. His essential goodness will finally cast off all his imperfections, and his whole nature will become homogeneous. His development does not consist in changing the evil into good, but in destroying the evil and substituting good in its place. On the other hand, a man may be internally and essentially evil, and externally good; he may know many truths and assume many virtues; then, according to the same law as that which operates in the good man, his progress will consist in casting off all that is apparently good in him, and in making his external conduct agree with his internal life. The only real progress that is possible for a bad man, is to cease to do evil—to let his essential nature become quiescent. But this would be retrograding, according to his idea, because it would be restraining him from the ends he desires to attain. It would be withholding him from what he loves. And this process, without any doubt, does go on in the hells. Its inhabitants improve in one respect. Their ruling loves, being constantly repressed and inevitably punished, they become, in a degree, quiescent. Their natures are not changed.

They do not become good, but they cease to be so violently and actively evil. They do not become more happy, but less miserable. The change is not from a lower to a higher life, but rather to a less active state of evil. To remove all the evils of an essentially bad man would annihilate him, for it would take away all his life. Thus, while the wicked in the hells become less actively evil, they never become radically better. Their love is not changed. They do not turn towards the Lord, but ever look away from Him towards their own loves. Those who are essentially evil cannot pass out of the state they are essentially in when they leave this world, for there is nothing in them to develop into goodness. This truth is illustrated and confirmed by all true knowledge of man's nature, and all the analogies of the Divine order.

But the Lord never permits any suffering to come upon us, either in this world or in any other, that is not for our good. The end of punishment is not the satisfaction of Divine justice. It is a permission of the Divine love, and its sole end is to keep men and spirits from plunging into deeper evils, and consequently from bringing upon themselves greater sufferings. This must be so, from the fact that all pain grows out of the violation of law, or of the order and constitution of our nature. It is,

therefore, as impossible for men to do wrong, and not suffer spiritually, as it is for them to violate the laws of health and not suffer physical pain. The end of the punishment of the wicked, therefore, is to save them from greater suffering. It is one way in which the Lord protects the evil, and withholds them from greater evils. All punishment is reformatory. The Lord always gives all the good He can to every one. If He cannot give a positive good, because man will not receive it, He will at least restrain him as far as possible from greater evils. And so far as an evil becomes quiescent, to that degree one is saved from the consequences of it.

The conclusions to which we must come, then, concerning the nature and punishment of the wicked in the spiritual world are these:

1. All punishment flows from evil, and is so inseparably connected with it, that one cannot exist without the other. No punishment comes from the Lord or the angels. Even when evil spirits inflict it upon one another, it still flows from their wickedness.

2. The punishments or sufferings which the wicked endure, must, from the very nature of their condition and state, surpass all the powers of language to describe. They are more various than the pains of body and mind which men suffer in this world. All are not punished alike,

but in every case, as the suffering flows from the evil, it is exactly proportioned to it.

3. As the lusts of the infernals become quiescent, as they must do when they find that every attempt to act from them inevitably produces pain, their sufferings will become less. But it will be rather from the loss of life, than from any positive improvement in character. It will be more like the mitigation of suffering from the torpor of cold when one is freezing, than from any increase of goodness. But however great the changes of this evil nature may be, there is no possibility that the wicked can be elevated out of it, and pass into heaven, for they have nothing within them that is capable of receiving the life of heaven, and no grounds or basis for forming that life. That point in their creation, when the germs of a true spiritual organization could have been formed, has been passed, and they can never return to it.

4. The purpose of all punishment or pain in every form, is to prevent evil, and consequently greater suffering. It is in no sense or form vindictive. No one is punished because he was once guilty of an evil, which no longer exists in his nature. But punishment is permitted only, and just to that degree which is necessary to keep his evil desires within bounds, and thus prevent a greater evil.

In general, the hells are governed by fear, for there are no other motives which have weight with their inhabitants. They have no conscience, no sense of shame, no remorse, no love for anything good, no desire for improvement. They are the embodiment and forms of their own evils. Their whole nature is homogeneous. There is no ground for any conflict within themselves, for there are no opposing principles in their minds. They love evil, and they believe nothing but the falsities that correspond to their evils. There is no ground for development, for there are no germs of goodness in them to develop. The best and only thing that can be done for them is to restrain them from without. This is accomplished by a principle of universal order, according to the same law that rewards the good; according to laws that operate in this life in the same manner, and which are inherent in the very nature of man. The wicked are not wholly miserable. They have their satisfactions and delights as the wicked do in this world. The Lord does all He can for them. They could not be happy in heaven. They would writhe in perfect agony if they were admitted into its pure atmosphere. The Lord's mercy is as fully shown in the condition of the lowest devil as in the highest angel. He gives all the good to every human

being He has created, that he can be made to receive.

Thus man finds his home according to his state. His state, whether good or evil, determines it and forms it. The same law that makes the water the most suitable and delightful home for the fish, and the air for the bird, and determines the specific relations of every species of animal life to those substances which supply its food, which forms its instincts and habits, and leads it to its home, operates in the final disposition of every human being. There is no possibility of escape from it, without reversing all the laws of the Divine order. And that would be no escape from it. Instead of relieving the Divine character from any apparent want of mercy and wisdom, and any human being from comparative misery, it would cause universal ruin, and either destroy the universe, or bring upon all created beings, the good as well as the evil, a thousand-fold more misery than is now suffered by the evil alone. There is, therefore, nothing in the doctrine that the wicked must suffer, and that they can never entirely escape from suffering, that is contrary to the eternal truth that "The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works."

CHAPTER IX.

MAN IN HEAVEN.

HEAVEN, which all hope to attain, is a state of rest, of peace, and perfect happiness. But what is the nature of that happiness? What am I to enjoy there? What shall I find there that will fill my heart with peace and blessedness too great for words to express? These are questions which receive various and contradictory answers.

Multitudes, wearied with labor, look forward to heaven as a state of eternal repose. They will have no more duties to perform, no more burdens to bear; necessity will no longer goad them to reluctant tasks. They will have nothing to do but "to sit among the lazy saints," and bask in the sunshine of the Divine favor. Others add to this repose some degree of social intercourse. They will recline upon the banks of the heavenly Jordan, and recount to one another the various scenes of their past life, and they will hear from others—from the lips of Adam, and Moses, and David—an account of their personal history while in this world. The

prevalent idea among Christians at the present day is, that heavenly happiness will consist in for ever singing the praise of the Lord. The multitudes of the saved will surround His throne, bowing before Him, and casting their golden crowns at His feet; they will for ever sing the song of Redeeming Love, and make the whole heavens resound with anthems to His praise and glory.

In all these opinions, and in many others, the fundamental idea is cessation from all useful and active employment. Heaven is to be an eternal holiday, a state of security from every danger, and of rest from all work. This, as you will see upon a little reflection, is a merely negative conception of it. It is making heaven to consist in what it is not, rather than in what it is. There will *not* be any labor, or care, or anxiety, or bereavement. There will not be any tears or sorrow. There will be no more pain. But this can be said of the stones in the street, and the lilies in the field, and of the material body, as it lies mouldering to dust in the grave. But this is not happiness. It may be escape from the punishment due to sin; a release from those fears which torment so many in this world, with a sense of security for the future; but still this does not constitute a single element of happiness.

And if we take all that is positive in popular belief, we shall find but a few simple elements of happiness which could not long content an intelligent being, unless his nature was much changed from what it is in this life, and shorn of many of its noblest qualities. Whittier's poor Brother of Mercy spoke the truth who said:

> "And if one goes to heaven without a heart,
> God knows he leaves behind his better part."

"To sit down clad in white robes and wear a golden crown, for ever and for ever," would be very poor and wearisome happiness, even if the repose was varied by conversation and song. No; if the common belief is true, heaven is not so perfect a life as this. Instead of advancing towards the perfection of the Divine character, man sinks down towards the condition of the brute and the clod, when he enters the spiritual world. Man's capacities for happiness are not so great as they are in this world, nor are the means of supply so various, full, and abundant. His noblest faculties of reason and affection must lose their power, their very nature, before he could endure the torpor of eternal repose. He is now an instrument of myriad strings, and the common belief would destroy all conception of him as a real substantial being, and of the spiritual world as anything but an empty

name, and leave him only one string to thrum upon in dull monotony through eternity. The conversation of such beings must become, in time, as trite as nursery rhymes. They would long to return to earth and undergo its labors and suffer its pains, or even think

> "The world of pain were better, if therein
> One's heart might still be human, and desires
> Of natural pity drop upon its fires
> Some cooling tears,"

than to be a useless drone in the universe.

There is but little said directly in the Bible about the special means of our happiness in heaven. But every page of the Word declares the essential nature of a heavenly life. It is written so plainly and declared in so many forms, that it would seem impossible for any one who desired to know, to come to any other than one conclusion, and that is, that heaven must consist in a life of active use. If we examine our natures with any degree of care and wisdom, we cannot fail to see that all our happiness flows and must flow from the normal, healthy activity of our faculties, and the more full, varied, and harmonious the activity is, the greater our happiness. Reason and experience teach us this. Repose and rest are pleasant; but it is action that makes them so. Sleep is sweet

and refreshing; but it is the labor of waking hours that makes it so. Eternal sleep is eternal death. It is delightful to throw off all the burdens of labor, to put the yoke of duty from the neck, and give the mind up to sport and play; free from all care. But if there was no sense of responsibility, and no special work to do, there would be no relief in our amusements, no recreation in our release from duty. The Lord has given us no useless faculties of head or heart. He intended them all for use. He formed them all to be the means of communicating to us some delight. And that delight can only be attained by their use. As the pipe and string make music only when they vibrate, so man's faculties, from the highest to the lowest, give him delight only when they are exercised. It is wise use that gives the largest measure of happiness, and this use is the only condition of happiness on earth or in heaven.

The Bible everywhere inculcates this life of active use. We are commanded to love others; to do them good; to let our light shine; to improve the talents the Lord has given us; to work in His vineyard; and everywhere He promises to reward us according to our deeds. Many suppose we are to do our work in this life and to receive our reward in another. This is true in one sense. But the reward is not for

work, as men pay wages; but in the work itself. In keeping the commandments there is great reward. The only way in which we shall be rewarded in the spiritual world for work done in this, is in the strength and culture we get by it, and the consequent increase of capacity to do and to receive. In endeavoring to ascertain the nature of heavenly happiness, then, let us keep this eternal law of the Divine order and of man's spiritual nature continually in view, as our guide and rule of reason.

Heaven is a state of greater happiness than this world because we shall find there more abundant, various, and perfect means for the exercise of every faculty of the will and the understanding.

All happiness flows from love. There is no exception to this law. The wicked find their delight in the indulgence and gratification of their evil lusts. It is the gratification of the affection, whether good or evil, which constitutes the delight. But the delights which flow from evil are soon turned to pain, because they are contrary to the Divine order; while those that originate in the exercise of good affections, enlarge our capacities for happiness. The love of self and the world receives its poor and momentary reward; but it contracts the heart, and closes it against the inflowing love of the Lord,

and arrays those who exercise it against Him, and against every human being; while the love of the Lord and the neighbor opens the heart to Divine influences, and conjoins man to man, to angels, and the Lord.

The happiness of heaven consists preëminently in the fact, that all pure and noble affections will have the widest scope and the most abundant means for their development, and I know of no other way in which that happiness can be described, than by stating the facilities we shall find there for the exercise of our affections, and some of the most general forms which they will assume.

1. In heaven we shall be in perfect freedom. All freedom springs from love. We feel free when we can carry into effect the ends of life, or do what we please. In this world we are restricted by the nature of material substances, by our necessities, by opposition from others, and innumerable other things, from carrying out our affections into complete effect. But in heaven all these obstacles will be removed. Space will not separate us from those we love. They will all be with us. Necessity will not compel us to forego any delight. We shall have abundant means to gratify every taste and every desire. We shall meet with no opposition from others. On the contrary, every one will do all in his

power to assist us in the attainment of our ends. We shall find helping hands and encouraging hearts on every side. We shall find those who can tell us all we desire to know, and assist us in all we desire to do.

Reflect a moment upon this one element of heavenly happiness. You can form some estimate of it from your experience in this life. Suppose you have an ardent desire to accomplish some great good for yourself or for humanity in this world. The moment you propose it you find every one desirous of helping you. You find sympathy, encouragement, and helping hands in every movement, and you are borne up and carried along on the flood-tide of good-will to the full accomplishment of your end. What consciousness of power it would give you! What certainty of success! What security, satisfaction, and peace! You will find this happiness to perfection in heaven. Every heart, and brain, and hand will be yours. Yes, and vastly more than that; all the Divine forces will favor you; omnipotence will be yours.

2. There will be no conflict between the various faculties and degrees of your own mind. Every nature will be homogeneous throughout in all its planes and degrees. You will not have to practise any self-denial. You

will have no right eye to pluck out, no offending hand or foot to cut off, no life to lay down. You will love the Lord and the neighbor supremely, and therefore you cannot have any personal ends to gratify in preference to their good. There is no ground for self-denial, for your selfhood consists in loving others; and the only room for self-denial would be in preventing yourself from doing all in your power to promote the happiness of others—in making your life an idle and useless one.

This harmony of nature will be especially manifest in the perfect unity of the will and the understanding. In this life they are distinct. We love and desire what we do not know how to attain, and we have a knowledge of truth which we do not love to obey and do. Hence there is a perpetual conflict between the will and the understanding, and a sense of incompleteness and a want of satisfaction in all we do.

But it will not be so in heaven. We shall know how to do all that we love to do, and we shall love to do all that we know how, and we shall do it. There will be no overplus of knowledge or of will. Thus every deed will be complete. It will be to us the perfect ultimation and embodiment of our affection and thought, and consequently will perfectly content us. What a profound satisfaction there must be in

this! What fulness and completeness it must give to the activities of every day! Our work will content us; our affection is perfectly satisfied! We see no way in which it could have been done better. There is nothing lacking and nothing over.

3. Our work will not only content us, but it will content others also. There will be no envy or jealousy. Each one will hold the same relation to others in the same society that an organ of the mind or the body holds to the other organs. Each one will have his special function, some use which he can perform better than any one else. As the hand can do some things better than the eye, and the eye some things better than the ear, and so on with every organ in the body, so each member of a society can perform his own use better than any one else in the whole heavens. He will delight to do it, and all will delight to acknowledge his special use.

What harmony and loving regard this would produce in the society and in the whole heavens! Imagine such a society in this world. Every member is in his place, and delights to be in it. Each one can do something that will be useful to the whole society better than any one else, and he does it perfectly, and all delight to acknowledge his use. What unity and

power such a society or government would possess, and what happiness they would find in working together for a common end! Such will be the happiness of every society in heaven. Each one will be content with his function, because it will content all others; and all others will be content with it because he who performed it was filled with delight in doing the good, and because no one else could do it so well. Thus, while each person is a complete human being in himself, he is a complement to every other member of a heavenly society, and they are all rounded into a symmetrical and perfect whole. Each one serves the whole, and all serve each one.

Can you conceive of any state, so far as regards yourself personally, that could be more conducive to perfect peace and happiness than this? There is not a discord in your whole nature; there are no conflicting elements within or without you. All the faculties of will, of understanding, of reason, and even sense, act in perfect harmony with each other. There could be no hesitation whether to speak or act; there could be no doubt about how we ought to act, or what we should say. There would be no imperfection in our utterance. We could express ourselves fully to the nicest shade of meaning; there would be no danger of being misunderstood. The hand and foot, and the whole spiritual

body, would perfectly obey the will. Every faculty and organ would move as one and reach the desired attainment.

This would be rest worthy of the name. Not the rest of inaction and death ; but the rest from every jar and discord and constraint. The rest of perfect freedom, of harmonious activities that invigorate rather than exhaust. This would be the peace of heart and mind, of reason and act, all reposing upon each other, and moving joyously in accord with all other movements without and within.

4. But not only will all the elements of our own natures be in perfect harmony with each other, and with all who dwell in the heavens, and with the Lord, but every object without and around us will also be in perfect harmony with us. It is impossible for us to conceive how much this state of the outward world would enhance our happiness. But its effect must be far greater than we have any words to express, or imagination to conceive. To see everywhere around us, and above us, within the whole scope of our vision, nothing to offend us, nothing to suggest the feeling or the thought that anything is wanting to the perfection of the scene. Not only to see beauty everywhere, in landscape and home, but just the kind of beauty that is the most delightful to us. Wherever the eye rests,

to be able to say, that suits me; that equals my ideal. And far more than this, not only to be content with it, but to see the significance of everything. How little we know of the meaning of the outward world! The flower is lovely, the landscape beautiful, the mountain sublime, but we gather only a vague and imperfect meaning from them. They say but little to us. But in heaven it is not so. Everything in particular and in general will answer to our affections and thoughts; will be our idea; and we shall feel a personal interest in it. There will be the same harmony and unity of the whole outward world with the whole world within, that there is between the various faculties of our being. Imagine yourself to be in such a world, in such a state, where perfect harmony reigns! even with your present capacities for happiness, your senses dimmed and muffled with the veil of clay. And could you ask for anything more? What more could you ask? It equals your highest conceptions, and you could not ask for what you could not conceive. There would be no want of satisfaction; no vague longing for some unattained and unattainable good. Your affections and thoughts would rest in peace and perfect contentment.

5. But if we should stop here, we should have a very poor and imperfect conception of heavenly happiness. I have as yet stated but little more

than the means for the attainment of happiness. We shall not only be in this harmonious and perfect state as to the essential conditions of happiness, but all our capacities will be largely and variously increased in power. The senses will become inconceivably more delicate and acute. The sight will become amazingly sharpened. Two causes will heighten the brilliancy of all colors, and the splendor in which all objects will be seen: the vastly increased purity and power of spiritual light, and a corresponding increase of sensitiveness and capacity in the eye. The light is so great that the light of our sun is mere darkness compared with it. The atmospheres glow and sparkle as if composed of rainbows and diamond dust. There are colors which cannot be formed from material light, and each color is far more clear, distinct, and brilliant, than the brightest on earth. The sense of touch is so delicate and acute in the spiritual body, and so perfectly adapted to all outward things, that every contact will give the most exquisite delight. We shall be all alive with sensation.

The same perfection will exist in the sense of hearing. This sense is closely allied to the affections, communicating directly with them. It is this fact that gives to music its power. We know that each affection expresses itself by a peculiar tone of voice. Sorrow moans and wails; quiet

and gentle affections flow forth in soft and winning harmony; joy is loud and jubilant. Some chords are so plaintive, that they move us to tears quicker than any words. Indeed, some states of affection can be expressed much more fully and clearly by music than by words. If this is so here, what must it be in heaven, where the senses are much more acute, and the whole nature is attuned to finer harmonies than we can conceive! There are no discords there; nor do the inhabitants of heaven learn music as we do; it is spontaneous. At certain times, the affections of the angels flow forth in song; and then the song becomes the perfect embodiment and expression of the affection. And such is the similarity of state, that thousands and tens of thousands join in it in perfect concord. The particular states which gave it birth are fully expressed in the various parts and movements of the song, and all combine like various chords in one grand harmony. All who hear it understand it, and are affected by it. Thus every heart in the whole society vibrates in unison, is delighted, exalted, and thrilled by it. What voices the angels must have! We hear some in this world that thrill us with delight; what then must they be in heaven? Every tone is clear, round, smooth, and sweet; every chord is perfect; every note has its meaning, a meaning

that is fully understood. All voices blend in perfect harmony, and give full and varied expression to every particular in the affection sung! And then with what acute perception they listen to this musical expression of pure, innocent, and exalted affections! Such delights will constitute one of the elements of heavenly happiness.

So we might employ a whole discourse upon the various delights of each sense, simply carrying out the general principle in some details to their logical consequence. Eternity will not exhaust, but increase their variety and perfection. But it is enough for our present purpose to know that the senses are far more acute, act with far more precision, and are more exquisitely adjusted to all outward forms. And all forms, colors, sounds, and qualities of external objects, are correspondingly perfect, and clearly defined.

It is a very common idea, that all things in the spiritual world (if there are any things there) are vague and indistinct in outline, shadowy, unreal, and illusory. But this is directly the reverse of the truth. They are far more real and distinct to every sense. Every person becomes more individualized. The lines which mark the identity of the angels are far more nicely and accurately drawn than they can be in this world. And this clear distinction in

form, in office, and quality of character, will constitute one of the perfections of the heavenly state. While all will act in harmony, each element in the society will become more distinct from every other.

6. Another element of heavenly happiness consists in the fact that all the inhabitants live in the present, and are totally absorbed in it. It is a very common opinion that one of the great sources of pleasure in heaven will consist in reviewing our former life in this world. But a little reflection will convince us that there could not be much pleasure in that. It does not give us much pleasure here to look back upon the past; why should it there? There would certainly be as much pain as pleasure in it. We shall be so fully absorbed in the various activities and delights of the present, and the new and attractive forms of the Divine wisdom, that we shall not think of the past or the future. There will be no regrets for the past, and we shall borrow no trouble about the future. The Lord will fill our hearts so full of absorbing activities and exquisite delights, that there will be no room for remembrance or expectation. We shall take no thought for the morrow; but, like lilies and sparrows, grow and sing, and in all possible ways communicate our delights, and trust implicitly in the Lord. There will be no

sting from the past, no shadow of doubt about the future. We shall be ever busy and active in giving to others; and while we do it, and in doing it, the Lord will give to us good measure, pressed down and running over, through others, and immediately from Himself; and so the eternal years will be an eternal succession of delights.

7. But although we live in the present we shall not remain stationary. The law of mental and spiritual development, which is clearly established in this life, will not be annulled in the spiritual world. On the contrary, it will be carried out under more favorable conditions. All the powers of the mind gain strength and expand by action. Our affections grow stronger and purer by exercise. So do the reason and the understanding. The more you put into the mind the more capacious it becomes. The more you know, the more rapidly you can learn, and the more you see there is to learn. The more you enlarge the range of your affections, the purer and stronger they become. The more you love others the more your capacity to love increases, and the increase is not by a diminished, but by an accelerated ratio. A wise man can learn a thousand things more easily than a child can learn one. When a man once looks beyond himself and begins to do good to others, it is much easier to do two good actions

than one. When you have given a dollar to your neighbor, from love to him, you can give two much more easily than you did the first.

Now, carry this law on into the spiritual world, and what must be the consequences? Do you not see that the infant born to-day may pass beyond the present attainments of the highest angel? Do you not see that there are, and can be, no assignable limits beyond which the regenerate soul may not pass? That our capacities for knowing, and loving, and, consequently, for happiness, must for ever increase in a continually accelerating ratio? What shall we become, then, when millions of ages have rolled away? The cup of life's happiness, full to-day, and by this fulness made larger for to-morrow; every affection giving birth to a purer, higher, and more glorious truth, and every new truth preparing the way for a sweeter, lovelier, more blessed affection, and so on, for ever rising, for ever perfecting, for ever nearer the Lord. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be!" No, it doth not. The highest angel cannot conceive it. Oh, the grandeur, the glory of the blessedness of human destiny! As a necessary consequence of this continual and rapid expansion and perfection of our natures, you can see that no one grows old in heaven. You can see that what Swedenborg says upon the subject must

be true, for it is the legitimate result of principles which we all acknowledge and see in constant operation in this life.

"They who are in mutual love," he says, "are continually advancing to the spring-time of their youth, and to a more and more gladsome and happy spring the more thousands of years they live; and this with continual increase to eternity, according to the degree and progress of mutual love, charity, and faith. Those of the female sex who have died in old age and enfeebled with years, and who have lived in faith in the Lord, in charity towards the neighbor and in happy marriage love with a husband, come after a succession of years more and more into the bloom of youth and early womanhood, and into a beauty which surpasses all conception of beauty that is ever perceptible to the sight. For it is goodness and charity forming and presenting their own likeness, and making the enjoyment and beauty of charity shine forth from every least feature of the countenance,—even so that they are very forms of charity. . . . This form is of ineffable beauty to the sight, affecting the very inmost life of the mind with charity. Through the beauty of this form truths of faith are presented in an image, and are even perceived from it. Such forms, or such beauties do they become in the other life

who have lived in faith in the Lord, that is in faith of charity. All the angels are such forms, with innumerable variety. Of these is heaven." (Arcana Cœlestia, No. 553.)

There is no old age, no infirmity, no sign of decay in heaven. Conceive every face you look upon to be a special and perfect form of some affection, so that it shall be distinctly, variously, and adequately portrayed in every feature, gleam forth in mild but radiant splendors from the eye, be enthroned in the forehead, moulded into beauty in the cheek, playing in smiles and lovely expression about the lips, flowing in harmony in the voice, rounding the whole form, and swaying it in graceful and gentle motions. And then conceive that you have the power of perceiving the meaning of every form and motion, and of being affected by it. It would send a thrill of joy through you, even to look upon such forms of purity and loveliness. What then must be the happiness of seeing such faces and forms everywhere, and of associating with them freely in all heavenly ministries?

8. I have said but little about the relations of the angels to the Lord, and I have no space to do it now, except to say that they are with Him, where He is. They are one with Him, not immediately in His personal presence, as many suppose; they could not bear that; but they live

in the sphere of His love, and in the light of His wisdom. They see Him in everything around them. They delight to acknowledge that all their possessions are His continual gift to them, and the various tokens of His love. All beautiful outward things, their habitations, their dress, their food, their beautiful ornaments, are His gifts; and they value them more as tokens of His love, than they do for their beauty. They are objects which suggest His love and thoughtful care. And they have a perception of their meaning. The thought is not, see what beautiful things I possess; but see the munificence, the love, and wisdom of the Lord! My Father gave me these.

So in all their lovely ministries to one another, they remember that the brother angel is only the voluntary medium of the kindness. The Lord is the real giver. They ask no return for the favors they bestow. They rather thank the Lord that He has permitted them to be the almoners of His bounty; and so in all things they regard Him first. And when they think of Him, and open their hearts to Him, a new wave of life from Him flows into them, expanding them, making their natures more delicate and sensitive to deeper and more exquisite delights. The attractions of His love get a more powerful hold upon them. They become more perfectly mag-

netized by it, and He draws them gently and lovingly, closer to His infinite heart. They feel the new life thrilling through them, and they see it blossoming into all lovely forms around them. Thus He lives in them, and they in Him, and the angels are continually becoming more and more perfect in union with the Lord. It is the Divine of the Lord; the Divine love and the Divine wisdom, which constitute heaven; and all are in heaven just in the degree they can receive that love and wisdom. You have friends there. Some who walked by your side in these streets, and met with you to worship. We see their faces here no longer. We have put their material bodies away tenderly into the earth, where they are returning to dust. But they are in heaven. Their faces are radiant with the Divine love. They have thrown off the infirmities of age, and they are advancing towards the spring-time of an eternal youth. There are our children. Beautiful, lovely innocents! They, too, are unfolding in those soft and glowing vernal airs, and becoming forms of the Divine love and wisdom. Our places will soon be vacant here. May they not be left eternally vacant there! May the Lord in His infinite mercy help us all to begin a heavenly life here, that we may continue it there, and become the partakers of its ineffable and ever enduring blessedness!

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